



APPENDIX K



Blog Entries



July 16, 2007

« [GOP Wants to Close Primary](#) | [Home](#) | [Marriott is DC's Favorite Ho-Tel Chain](#) »

[Subway to Sea: Where's WeHo?](#)

Filed under: [Politics - L.A. and WeHo](#), [WeHo Living](#)



Congress is about to finalize legislation allowing the Los Angeles MTA to tunnel underneath the Westside of Los Angeles to build the "Subway to the Sea." Problem is [coming up with consensus](#)—and funding for the project.

Rather than shoot straight down Wilshire—an easy proposal—why not consider taking to subway to places people want to go? How about building the Subway to the Grove, then to Cedars Sinai/Beverly Center/West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, UCLA, Brentwood then Santa Monica, linking in with the new Exposition line?

Under the Wilshire Plan, West Hollywood becomes the only City in West L.A. without any mass transit...

Who's going to pay for it? You ask...

I had a crazy idea over the weekend that West Hollywood should consider a London-style "Congestion Fee" along Sunset and Santa Monica Boulevards for vehicles not registered within City Limits. You could do alot to ease traffic in the City, improve quality of life and raise a few bucks to pay for public transit to the town.

Such an idea is likely impractical, however, since it would probably need enabling legislation from the State and probably cause retaliatory "fees" from neighboring cities... But maybe it is a starting point to discuss how we're going to accomodate growth without creating so many negative impacts on the environment.

Posted by The Original BoiFromTroy @ 9:13 am —



2 Comments »

1. Granted, I never drove in London, so I didn't pay that much attention—but I thought residents of the zone weren't exempt there. Why make that change here? Looking out for your own self-interests? 😊

Comment by Scott — July 16, 2007 @ [9:53 am](#)

2. LOL....I think collecting the fee would cause *more* congestion than the fee would alleviate.

But you're right; it IS kind of silly to build a subway along a major artery. In terms of getting people out of their cars, that limits the subway only to people who are going somewhere on that exact corridor.

Comment by [North Dallas Thirty](#) — July 16, 2007 @ [11:14 am](#)

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[WeHo Rocks the Metro Meetings](#)



In five previous meetings to discuss routings for a potential Subway to the Sea, less than four hundred people attended and [only 102 made public comments](#). Last night, more than one hundred attended a hastily-arranged [meeting at West Hollywood's Plummer Park](#), of whom 27 had filled out speaker cards before the meeting even began.

There was a palpable sense of frustration that the MTA has basically picked some decades-old plans off the shelf and dusted them off—relegating the study at this point to a choice between two alignments—along Santa Monica Boulevard and along Wilshire—while many MTA Board Members seem to have prejudged Wilshire as the preferred alternative before hearing from the public.

In my testimony, I asked that the MTA discard both the old plans and the street maps and instead, look at the aerial photos of Los Angeles' Westside. Doing so, you can easily identify places that are dense with housing, dense with businesses and are destinations. These places, like The Grove, Boystown/Cedars/Beverly Center (perhaps linked by an underground tunnel like at Montreal's UQAM station), Beverly Hills' Golden Triangle, Century City, UCLA and the Third Street Promenade should all be included. **Take the Subway to places people want to go!**

No one has really talked about it, but Boystown is one of the few destinations in Los Angeles with *regional* appeal. The Grove and the Beverly Center are nice, but do people come from Encino or Long Beach to visit them on a regular basis? Such considerations seem lost on Downtown bureaucrats who probably think that the bridge-and-tunnel crowd only visit WeHo on October 31st.

Doing a destination-based zig-zag might add ten minutes to the trip time between Santa Monica and Downtown—but people need to think that the Subway should not be just about getting from Santa Monica to Downtown. It should be about getting from the Grove to the Beverly Center or from West Hollywood to the Beach, or taking public transit from UCLA to the Coliseum—all such trips which would be left out of the equation if a simple Wilshire route were selected.

It's not too late to tell Metro what you think, so [drop them an email or fill out their comment card online!](#) Speak up now, because it *may be our last chance!*

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This entry was posted on Tuesday, October 30th, 2007 at 9:10 am and is filed under [WeHo Living](#), [Politics - L.A. and WeHo](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.

15 Responses to “WeHo Rocks the Metro Meetings”

1. *SoCal guy* Says:
[October 30th, 2007 at 2:07 pm](#)

Good work on the Metro planning. My question is...why would anyone want to go from Westwood to the Coliseum...to see their little boys in baby blue lose to USC?

2. *DFS* Says:

[October 30th, 2007 at 2:20 pm](#)

Acutally, look at the Red Car rail lines as a guide. That what the city grew around. And the last time I looked, one of the ROW is right in the middle of Santa Monica Blvd going straight (I know) down middle of the street.

Actually, the line needs to be close to RESIDENTS so they can walk and make sure it's going by BUSINESSES where they work. Don't use the SD Trolley as an example. Something that was built for tourists to subsidize the low wage service and travel industry.

Build a system for everyday commuters!

3. *BoiFromTroy* Says:

[October 30th, 2007 at 2:22 pm](#)

Methinks DFS needs to visit WeHo more often. They tore up the Red Car rails when the did the Boulevard reconstruction in the late 1990's.

4. *Jeff* Says:

[October 30th, 2007 at 4:24 pm](#)

Boi,

I agree completely, however, this is the same entity that thought it was a good idea to stop the Green Line BEFORE it got to LAX (knuckling to the taxi cab lobby). I would not hold my breath.

5. *carter* Says:

[October 30th, 2007 at 8:58 pm](#)

Bft-

Your thoughts are vey apt, and yet Jeff's comment regarding the Green line as well as the lack of \$\$\$ to put a stop at the Hollywood Bowl on the red line, etc. and you understand the frustration with planning versus political reality. The need for the downtown LA to S/Monica market is minimal, yet the need for the entire line to serve the entire region, including those in the valley or those in long beach or pasadena or beyond is paramount!!!

Keep fighting the fight, and of course, fight on!!!

6. *DFS* Says:

[October 30th, 2007 at 11:39 pm](#)

Scott, what's in there now, medians? Tear them up, the ROW is still there. Just like they are now tearing up the new medians on Exposition in front of SC to put the rail line BACK IN.

You can thank me later.

I don't really go to West Hollywood anymore. It's just not what it was. I stick to the Faultline and the Eagle. It's closer to campus and the men are more manly.

Any destination to Santa Monica needs to go to the beach, the biggest destination there is. Hopefully near the pier. Maybe a spur to Venice???

7. *Chris* Says:

[October 31st, 2007 at 8:35 am](#)

First of all, adding 10 minutes to the journey between Santa Monica and downtown will have a significant negative effect on ridership, which could lower the productivity of the line enough to affect federal funding.

More importantly, how is the subway going to serve clubs if it stops at midnight and the clubs close at 2 or later? Even if the subway ran later are you really going to take a date on the subway or pick up a guy and take him home on transit? in LA????

8. *BoiFromTroy* Says:

[October 31st, 2007 at 9:39 am](#)

Chris-

That is where bureaucrat math collides with actual math. The number of people going the full distance is relatively small. The number of trips you lose by staying, say, along Wilshire, is relatively large. Wilshire is dense in high rises but not population, whereas West Hollywood has about 20,000 people per square mile.

Even at 40 minutes from Downtown to Santa Monica, it is faster than by car during peak hours. If you measure travel times for areas AWAY from the freeway—where the medium-length and short-length rides will come from, subway would beat driving any day. That is the market Metro should focus on serving.

A Boystown stop could serve clubs—and maybe revive the happy hour—but more important, would serve the Metro Bus Depot, and allow an easy way for Metro employees to get to and from work—and result in cost savings for Metro so they do not have to buy land for a station!

9. *Tim* Says:

[October 31st, 2007 at 10:36 am](#)

Boi-

I don't live in West Hollywood and rarely have any reason to go there. I live downtown. My doctor is on Wilshire. LACMA is on Wilshire. Lots of dense urban development is on Wilshire. Even the Grove and Beverly Center are equi-distant between Santa Monica and Wilshire. The stops beyond Weho that you outline are already part of the Wilshire alignment.

I know you may be shocked, but for the majority of Los Angeles (and many gay men like myself) West Hollywood is not on our radar.

Wilshire makes the most sense for the initial line. A 10 minute delay to service the Beverly Center and Rage is ridiculous. Boozy bar bois and crystal-fueled club queens are not the bread and butter of metro-rail ... commuters are.

However, perhaps if we push for funds out of your tight-fisted governor to fund both the Santa Monica (from the Hollywood/Highland station) and Wilshire alignments we would have a win-win?

10. *Eastsider* Says:

[October 31st, 2007 at 1:03 pm](#)

Who goes to the Westside anymore ? I rarely go west of Fairfax. The future is Downtown and othe the

Eastside !

11. *DFS* Says:

[October 31st, 2007 at 7:53 pm](#)

Ok Scott, et al, here's your primer on Los Angeles transit, the Pacific Electric Railway:

<http://www.erha.org/pe.htm>

There is discussion of each line in the separate district, Northern, Southern and Western. Scott, you may find it very interesting. Give it a chance.

And you can enlarge the map and make it much bigger, along with printing it out.

Scott, there are ROW's in Santa Monica and a line to Venice. Lots of lines in Santa Monica.

The should be considered and studied for any future planning of rail transit in Los Angeles.

This is what development wrapped around guys.

12. *Ted B. (Charging Rhino)* Says:

[November 1st, 2007 at 11:38 am](#)

I don't understand the resistance to light-rail surface and elevated trolleys, they are massively-cheaper than tunneling. And combined with park-n-ride lots where they intersect major arterials and enclosed pre-paid passenger loading-bays for rapid ingress can move massive numbers of riders compared to even street busses. One progressive idea tried in a few cities is having a trolley-stop conveniently INSIDE large commercial parking garages that serve adjacent businesses and offices downtown. If it's an inexpensive trolley-ride away, people will use garages even if not immediately adjacent to their destination.

13. *Tim* Says:

[November 2nd, 2007 at 10:36 am](#)

I think the resistance is that they want to create transit that doesn't have to either fight with traffic or cast shadows on the street below.

The light rail they have built usually runs on old railroad and red car rights of way. Wilshire and Santa Monica don't have that.

Plus, the subways can carry more passengers. With more capacity, they can scale up as the population and usage increases.

14. *DFS* Says:

[November 2nd, 2007 at 10:23 pm](#)

Santa Monica DOES have it a ROW, and Scott knows it.

Also Wilshire is wide enough to have a rail line. It may have had one in the past. Why do you think some of these streets are so wide?

And regarding fighting traffic, that problem is easily solved, the rail cars will always have the ROW. When they get close to an intersection, the barriers come down, like they do for a train. This is how the SD Trolley works. Motor traffic has to yield to the rail traffic. It's the only way it can work.

15. *Matt Says:*

[November 5th, 2007 at 8:10 pm](#)

Wilshire never had a rail line. A bus company was formed in 1923 by Pacific Electric and Los Angeles Railway specifically to serve Wilshire. Due to the high ridership and congestion in the corridor, its been planned as a subway since 1962 - still waiting.....

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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 04, 2007

SUBWAY

The Times had a lengthy article yesterday about a change of route for the proposed "subway to the sea." For years the MTA has wanted to use the Wilshire corridor, which currently has the largest public transportation ridership. Now they are considering Santa Monica Blvd. as a possible alternative. Hmm.

First, where is it written in stone that the subway to the sea has to be a subway? God knows Los Angeles needs a better transportation system, but instead of digging a hole and then building a train, why not just build a train - or better yet, a monorail - and save half of the proposed \$6 billion budget. In the 1960s a European company offered to build a monorail system in Los Angeles for free. I'll bet they still have a phone. Why not call them?

Second, today's ridership figures are based on our ineffective, out-of-date bus system. A fast, efficient, clean, quiet monorail would unquestionably pull in millions of new riders, whatever route it follows.

Finally, the real reason the MTA has been unable to secure the Wilshire route for the subway is that the wealthy and powerful residents of Hancock Park don't want it there. They are afraid it will impact their pristine lifestyles. Well, boo-frigging-hoo! Imagine the nerve of the city, wanting to transport the general public through an exclusive neighborhood. We should probably give our Hancockers an additional tax cut - this is on top of what they're already getting from Mr. Bush - to make up for the emotional stress. I feel just terrible.

a foot on either side

posted by Bartley B @ [8:07 AM](#) [0 comments](#) [links to this post](#)

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Legislation to tunnel to Westside inches forward

A major obstacle to tunnel through the Fairfax District for a subway to serve the Westside moved closer to being lifted Wednesday when the U.S. Senate voted to repeal a ban on federal money for construction under Wilshire Boulevard.

Approved 88 - 7, the vote would repeal a ban enacted in 1985 when Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Los Angeles, argued that the threat of methane explosions made tunneling in the area dangerous. In 2005, an independent panel determined the area was safe for tunneling. Now the measure heads to a Senate-House conference committee, to reconcile differences between House and Senate versions of the funding bill.



While digging in March 1985 to build the Red Line subway -- originally designed to head west along the Wilshire Corridor to Santa Monica -- a methane gas explosion ripped through the Ross Dress for Less at Fairfax Avenue and Third Street and blew off much of its roof.

Tunneling in that direction stopped and the Red Line's route was changed to Hollywood and Vine and eventually North Hollywood.

Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa called Thursday's decision a victory to getting the city moving. Building a "subway to the sea" is a cornerstone of the mayor's political agenda.

Posted by Sue Doyle on September 13, 2007 03:38 PM | [Permalink](#)

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Los Angeles Is Broken

August 19th, 2007

Having been a resident of both Los Angeles and Orange Counties, I stand on reasonable authority to say that Los Angeles is utterly broken. Mayor Villaraigosa (Villar? Villa? What is he now?) apparently has a vision to spend a gajillion dollars to build a "Subway Towards the Sea." The plan is to extend the red line to run underneath Wilshire Boulevard in order to alleviate the congestion we currently have on our freeways. As this east-west line effectively takes you through most of the cities major thoroughfares, commercial and economic centers, and one major international airport, a subway running underneath Wilshire connecting downtown to Santa Monica sounds like a commuter's wet dream.

So at this point, I know what you're thinking.

LA has a subway?

Har! Yeah, I knew LA had a subway, but I feel no guilt in admitting (and probably joining millions of residents) that I've never ridden the subway in LA. This sad fact, as well as other circumstances, is why I think Los Angeles is utterly broken.

My drive to and from work every day is approximately an hour. I'm not complaining - it's just a way of life here in the city. The distance doesn't matter much anymore. So long as my drive is uneventful, my daily commute is a fairly pleasant experience. Ever since becoming an iPod owner, I've discovered podcasting, and an hour is actually good time spent listening to interesting subject matters that the radio stations don't really offer.

It's when I have to deal with things like road construction or lane closures that really set me off. As if the commuter doesn't have a hard enough time already, sometimes the freeway is extra special and reaaaaaalllyyy likes to move along at those snail paces. Imagine what a ten year transit project would do.

And in the end, how much more convenient would it make for your typical commuter? I calculate at least a dozen major stops over the 15 or so miles between downtown and Santa Monica. Judging from my experiences in New York and Hong Kong, traveling that distance would take approximately 20 minutes. But LA is not like New York or Hong Kong. Most residents live in the valley or inland or in Orange County, so people who wanted to use this subway would have to drive to a station that connected them to the line to begin with. I can't imagine that driving to a station, parking my car, waiting for a train to take me to a connecting line, taking the red line to my exit, then somehow arranging additional transportation to finally arrive at my office is going to significantly reduce my commute.

I now understand the necessity for master planned cities like Irvine. I used to have second thoughts about master planned cities because I thought they were nothing more than nice bougie place to live with not much substance. Real cities like LA and New York had soul, I thought. But now that I think about it, Irvine planners created a very smartly designed city which used its space very effectively. Despite being the 28th largest city in California with a population of 200K, the traffic in Irvine moves really well.

I think part of the reason why a subway system in LA has been difficult is because of sprawl. By and large, Los Angeles has resisted any effort to go vertical, and now we have 1,400 square foot homes sitting on 10,000 square foot lots. To make mass transit accessible and realistic for everyone, you'd have to build a system that effectively reaches 500 square miles of land. That, or reverse 150 years of growth.

I think we should just suck it up as Angelenos and stop trying to waste tax dollars on a problem that can't be solved. You can't

have it all, and when you think about it Los Angeles has it pretty good. 85 and sunny is the year round forecast. You're never more than an hour from the beach, but you're never more than an hour from hiking and snowboarding either. The entire world's cuisine can be found here, and any minute you can become famous for anything. If you want my advice, just deal with the traffic like I do: with mad, unreasonable, debilitating road-rage.

Entry Filed under: [General](#), [Rants](#), [Opinion](#), [Los Angeles](#)

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August 2007

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

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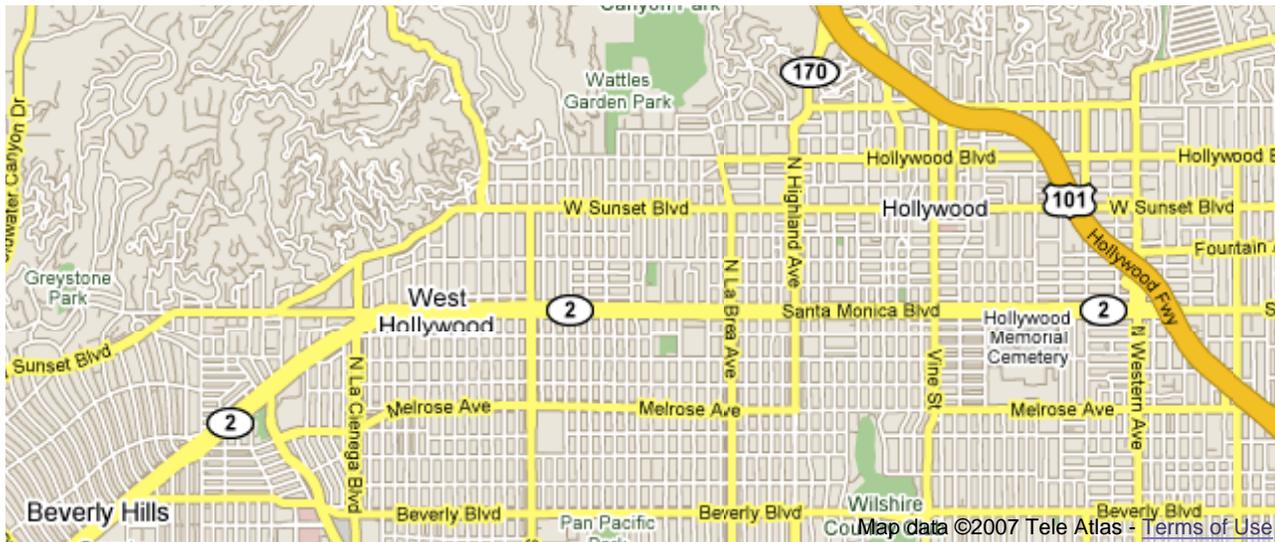
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NOVEMBER 3, 2007

LAist Poll: 'Subway to Sea,' Wilshire or through WeHo?



The *LA Times* is reporting today that Metro may be seriously looking at an extremely different route for half of the proposed Purple Line subway extension that would take commuters from Downtown to Santa Monica. However, the idea discussed here would take underground riders from the Hollywood/Highland station to Wilshire Blvd. along Santa Monica Blvd., traveling through West Hollywood and Beverly Hills hitting near the Beverly Center mall and Cedars-Sinai:

The new concept is still in its preliminary stages, and the Wilshire alignment remains on the table. But even though officials don't have funding for the \$6-billion project, the new concept has sparked much debate because of how crucial many officials see the subway to easing the Westside's traffic woes.

The new route would bypass the Miracle Mile and Hancock Park, where opposition remains strong to a subway from residents in the upscale residential district.

At the same time, officials and residents in Hollywood and West Hollywood are rolling out the welcome mat, saying the younger, apartment-living residents in that area would be more likely to take the subway. [*LA Times*]

What says you? Vote on the poll after the jump.



By [auron](#)
[1] | 11/03/07 01:41PM

What a horrible idea... while I definitely think a Santa Monica route needs to be a long-term priority, think how long it'll take to get from Union Station to Wilshire/Vermont to Hollywood/Highland and back down to Colorado/4th... it's a sideways S, and it'll defeat any speed advantage that a Wilshire route provides. Because you'll be weaving back and forth across LA, the subway will be no faster than driving.



By [Matthew Walsh](#)
[2] | 11/03/07 02:42PM

Its not supposed to be faster than driving.. its supposed to take you where you need to go



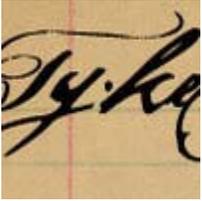
By [UpBy11](#)
[3] | 11/03/07 03:07PM

I'm still waiting for a faster and safer way to get from Chinatown to the LACMA by foot. If they want to build the alternate route, let them do it but at least call it the Periwinkle line and give me access to Fairfax.



By [wrightconcept](#)
[4] | 11/03/07 08:15PM

What is the simple way to not give into Hancock Park NIMBY's? Keeping the westward extension and not putting a station at Wilshire/Crenshaw. They're right Metro should not waste \$200 Million on a station these snobs won't use. And with that money saved that can be better used to connect the Crenshaw Corridor from Wilshire/Crenshaw to Wilshire/La Brea via Mid City that where there's ridership and supportive land uses to make the subway a success.



By [tykeCjohnson](#)
[5] | 11/03/07 08:20PM

going down la brea is fkn retarded. no one needs to go to room 5 and lame ass pinks that bad.



By [spoon](#)
[6] | 11/03/07 10:55PM

Just build it, we will come.



By [xvdr](#)
[7] | 11/06/07 10:57AM

the weho/santa monica blvd branch is an excellent idea! but the straight-down-wilshire (with century city slight detour) route should definately be the priority. first get people between downtown l.a. and santa monica. this weho branch should be part of a second route between santa monica and hollywood as the endpoints, and not as a pass-through for travelers going between sm and dtla.



By [dantheman99](#)
[8] | 11/06/07 02:04PM

This is a false choice. We need BOTH funded and built, quickly and safely.

There's more to the Santa Monica Blvd. alignment than just traveling from the Westside to downtown. It has North/South benefits as well.

Jody Litvak of the MTA stated in a City Beat interview that at the resent MTA Westside transit extension forums they received more people commenting support for a westward extension form Hollywood/Highland than they expected.

They are obligated to consider it. At first the MTA ignored West Hollywood and the City of West Hollywood had to ask for a forum to make sure they weren't left out.

It is understandable to believe the people at the MTA (as well as much of L.A.) had already made up their minds unofficially for a Wilshire alignment to the sea. Remember, they've had 20 years to think about this.

The article shows that there is popular support for a subway in Hollywood/West Hdlywood without the old guard

residential opposition. If the MTA is even considering a second alignment seriously, it is because the grass roots is demanding it.

What I saw and read about at the forums were people arguing for a second line in addition to the Purple Line extension. For some people, that meant Santa Monica Blvd from La Brea to Century City. For others, that meant something north/south from Hollywood/Highland, zig zagging, possibly connected with the Crenshaw project.

I didn't hear anyone arguing for the "Pink" Line INSTEAD of the "Purple" Line to the sea.

The LA Times reporting hasn't been really stellar. In an earlier article, the Wilshire alignment didn't even mention the possibility of spurring into Century City. Their online "Bottleneck Blog" hasn't been refreshed in several days.

What I think is happening is a realization that a Purple Line extension by itself isn't enough and that many people want a "Pink" or second alignment proposed at the same time as part of the same corridor study.

However, this isn't just about getting downtown from the Westside. The San Fernando Valley has a stake in this discussion. The gentleman from the MTA who did the visual presentation at the Santa Monica forum mentioned that the Santa Monica Blvd. corridor has regional implications as well. It would allow for a direct ride from the San Fernando Valley to the Westside, which anyone who's snaked through a canyon to work or ridden the Sepulveda Pass knows is needed as much as the Red Line helps the Valley go southeast to downtown.

I think the L.A. Times reporter, who probably drove to work in a single-occupancy vehicle, is just having a brain awakening to the other possibilities for westside rail for the first time. They embody L.A.'s establishment and they like much of L.A.'s establishment is playing catch up.

I don't think anyone expects the MTA to commit to building the Pink line first. However, if they built both lines at the same time, that would be a dream come true for me.

I'm glad Jody Litvak also mentioned she heard support for a Sepulveda/405 Line from LAX to the Valley.

I also think there could be Crenshaw project possibilities to head north on Farfax/LaCienega/SanVicente.

But, whatever. I'm just glad the LA Times didn't run over to misguided idiots at the BRU to ask what they thought and how improved bus service would lead to a socialist bus-only transit riding utopia, which it wouldn't.

The MTA needs to continue improving bus service, but bus-only transit will not keep L.A. economically and environmentally sustainable. And, the money not spent on rail would go into the futile attempt to preserve the quality of single-occupancy motoring.



By [SameerKhan](#)
[9] | 11/06/07 08:17PM

Both lines must be built. The West Hollywood corridor is a very important line as it would cross high-density neighborhoods and areas that attract tens of thousands of people daily (e.g. the strip and "Boystown")... but if we had to choose only one for now, I would give priority to the Wilshire corridor before the West Hollywood corridor, simply due to the more direct route, higher bus ridership, and higher density of businesses and other destinations.



By [interurbans](#)
[10] | 11/09/07 04:34PM

We need to keep our eyes on the prize. The line needs to be built down Wilshire Blvd. ASAP as it is the heaviest corridor and needs the service.

Could this be a distraction and a monkey wrench in the works to slow down the line like the Venice Sepulveda detour on the Expo Line was to slow or stop it? With out this detour the line would now be complete for the same amount of money to Santa Monica as it is taking to only get to Culver City.

This same strategy could delay or stop the subway to the sea and would certainly delay it's start of construction and drive up cost.

An elevated LRT or Monorail line from the Hollywood Highland Station Red Line Station to West Hollywood, Beverley Hills and to Century City could do the job for a lot less and the Wilshire subway would not be delayed.

Alan Fishel



By [dantheman99](#)
[11] | 11/10/07 09:36AM

Those of us who fervently believe in the "Pink Line" do not see this as a distraction, but as a vitally important project with its own substantial merits. If the Pink Line is proposed as an LRT, I don't think that would be objected to by many who want a rail line of some sort built. The Pink Line has even been mentioned as a possible northern branch of the Crenshaw Line as an LRT, going up San Vicente to Santa Monica and then cutting over to Hollywood/Highland, in addition to the idea of a Hollywood/Highland to Century City extension. I like the idea of it going from H/H to LaBrea/Santa Monica then to LaCienega/Santa Monica to the LaBrea stop of the Expo Line as a vital north/south link.

While I agree with everyone who believes the Purple Line is the first priority, that doesn't mean that Pink Line supporters are throwing a wrench into the works.

It came as a surprise to the MTA and probably to others how much support there is for some sort of Santa Monica Blvd. project, whatever modality that turns out to be.

It makes sense that the civic leaders in West Hollywood would work to try and ensure their city wasn't left out of the rail system altogether as may have seemed likely if they hadn't lobbied to get the MTA's attention. They at least have the MTA's attention that there is need and popular support for something.

I would expect the City of WeHo and other Pink Line supporters to keep lobbying for it. However, I wouldn't fear it. After 20 years of waiting, I cannot conceive the MTA will not go for the Wilshire alignment first.

I'm a believer in a rising tide lifting all boats. The more interest there is in mass transit anywhere in So. Cal. helps the cause of mass transit everywhere in So. Cal.

I wonder if the MTA has the right to kick off those parking structures on their former track land in Beverly Hills. Beverly Hills doesn't seem to want a Santa Monica Blvd. stop at this time. If some Pink Line modality is built, it seems those who lobbied for a Beverly Connection / Cedar Sinai stop will be in luck and those who have their hearts set on taking rail to the Grove may not be, but who knows at this point.

There is a big difference between Pink Line supporters and the Cheviot Hills NIMBY trying to get the Expo line detoured to Venice-Sepulveda.

The support for the Pink Line is genuine and comes from the people who live and work and play in those communities and genuinely want it. It is not being proposed as an alternate route by the Hancock Park old guard trying to stop the Purple Line.

I have yet to hear anyone who supports the Pink Line to say it should be built INSTEAD of the Purple Line. The fact that any part of So. Cal. wants mass transit and will lobby for it is something to celebrate, IMO.

As a side note, Beverly Hills has a preference for the Wilshire alignment, so it's politically easier at this point to go forward with that.

As much as I would love to ram a Crenshaw Blvd. stop down the throats of people in Hancock Park who have been fighting a subway for years, perhaps the MTA should put off committing to building a Crenshaw stop just to get the line built and through. But that's for another thread.

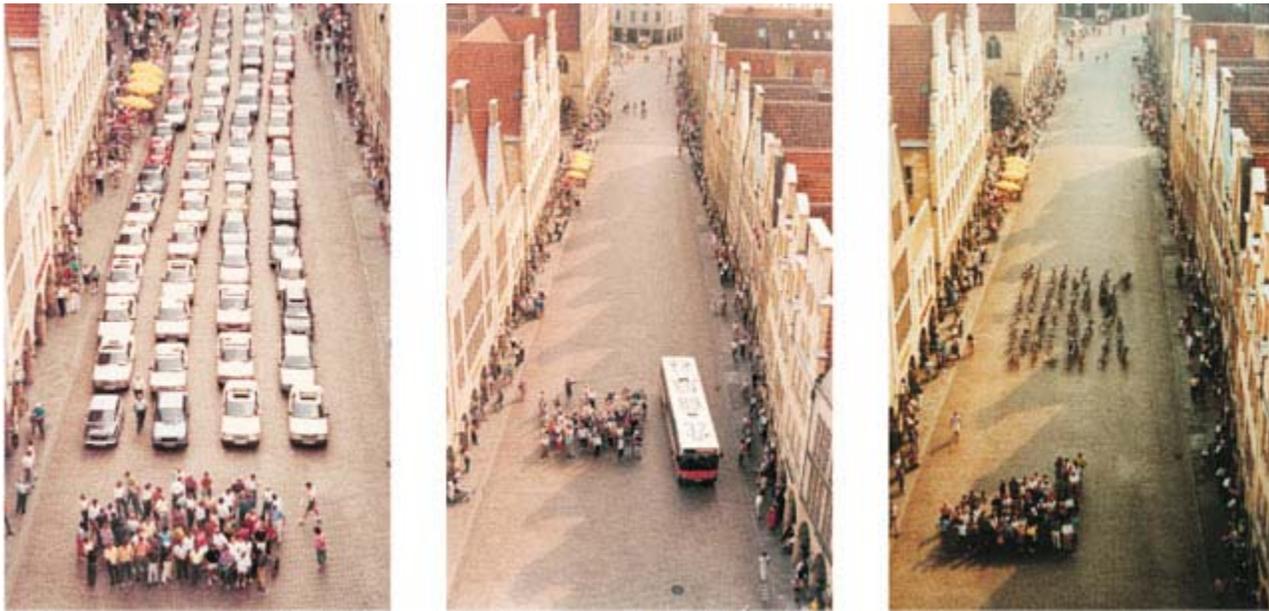
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| C



NOVEMBER 4, 2007

Same Number of Commuters, Different Methods



Amount of space required to transport the same number of passengers by car, bus or bicycle.

This poster, from the City of Munster in Germany, has been making its way around the internet this past week. Now, either an internet star or slut, it carries a simple message about congestion, urban planning and people: cars are great, but can really suck in certain situations and people will just deal with it anyway.

We often hear in the comments sections of transit posts about Wilshire Blvd. that the "billion" buses on the street are the problem. Just imagine all those bus riders in their car behind, next, in front and all around you. In fact, that could 30,000 extra cars.

Or just imagine if there were park-and-ride lots along Wilshire and the majority of people took buses. Then the only traffic the bus would sit through was of their own kind.

And then imagine if money actually existed to fund the Purple Line 'subway to the sea.'

Image from the City of Munster, Germany Planning Office (h/t MetroRiderLA)

By [Zach Behrens](#) in [Transportation](#) | [Link](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#) | [Recommend this! \(5\)](#) | [\[+\]](#)

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COMMENTS (1) [SHOW GUEST COMMENTS]

Avatar [Fabricio](#)
 By [fabricio](#)
 [1] | 11/04/07 12:00PM

Ohh come on... what you are doing is thinking and being practical. That doesn't apply in the overspender "the more gas I consume and the bigger the better" mentality of southern california.

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[C]



JULY 17, 2007

Wilshire Subway Watch: WeHo Gets Shafted



As Beverly Hills gets ready for [their meeting tonight](#), *Boi from Troy* ponders about the city of West Hollywood being the [only Westside city without any purple tunnel love](#):

Rather than shoot straight down Wilshire—an easy proposal—why not consider taking to subway to places people want to go? How about building the Subway to the Grove, then to Cedars Sinai/Beverly Center/West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, UCLA, Brentwood then Santa Monica, linking in with the new Exposition line?

He continues to suggest a congestion style pricing on Sunset and Santa Monica Boulevards for vehicles not registered within West Hollywood. As he admits, impractical it would be.

However, he is right to bring up the WeHo traffic clusterfuck problem and what solutions are being thought of today to put in place tomorrow. As much as West Hollywood is a more ideal place of a subway stop destination for many people, the fact that Wilshire is one of most, if not the most, congested streets in America has a lot of pull.

Take [this story from MetroRiderLA](#) about how well the [new Metro Rapid Express](#) along Wilshire Blvd. works when it hits Beverly Hills:

While the subway's chances of reaching the sea are bobbing between "slim" and "none," Wilshire Boulevard has both road and transit congestion. Yes, in Los Angeles, of all places, there is such a thing as too many people riding a bus. Wilshire Boulevard is busy.

Crowd: How busy is it?

MetroRiderLA: It's so busy that a Rapid bus line had to get a Rapid bus line.

[snip]

Here's the deal. The bus, NABI 60-BRT #9347, arrives at Fourth Street and Wilshire Boulevard in Santa Monica at 4:45 p.m. Over half of this trip's 53 passengers board here. It arrives in Westwood about 15 minutes later... Less than 10 minutes later, the bus speeds through Millionaire's Row and gets to Santa Monica Boulevard.

[snip]

East of Fairfax Avenue, speed picks up again, although the bus is not a road rocket...

It arrived at Vermont in 75 minutes. Santa Monica to Koreatown in 75 minutes with the fastest bus on Wilshire. Of this, 40 minutes was passing through Beverly Hills. About three miles of the route accounts for more than half of its running time.

Hell, not only must the subway be built to the sea, Beverly Hills has to pay for it all.

Line 920, perfect from Koreatown to Fairfax or Westwood to Santa Monica. Anything in between requires a helicopter.

The tone of "Beverly Hills has to pay for it all" sounds right on the money. But that would only work if it were the residents were paying and not the poor city coffers of the city of Beverly Hills.

So if four to five-thousand millionaires wanted to donate one million each, then we could afford some peace of mind along America's busiest street. Tom Cruise, we're starting with you.

By [Zach Behrens](#) in [Wilshire Subway/Purple Line](#) | [Link](#) | [Comments \(2\)](#) | [Recommend this! \(2\)](#) | [\[+\]](#)

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COMMENTS (2) [HIDE GUEST COMMENTS]

I tried posting this on Boi's site following the link above. I don't know if it made it through, but I agree with the author that West Hollywood deserves a subway line. Here's the comment:

Tom Wetzel, who frequented the la.transportation newsgroup, suggested a plan for extending the subway to the ocean -- via West Hollywood. Since then, I have called it the Wetzel Plan, since he made a great case for turning the line north or northwest at Fairfax Avenue rather than shooting it straight on Wilshire Boulevard.

Overall ridership would be much higher than a straight-shot along Wilshire. Between Fairfax and Santa Monica Boulevard, there are mostly office and medical buildings along Wilshire. There's heavy demand during rush hours, noticeably lighter demand during mid-days, and a virtual ghost town on weekends.

However, if the subway were to run north along Fairfax or San Vicente Boulevard to somewhere in the West Hollywood city limits, and then return to Wilshire via Santa Monica Boulevard, this would actually gain anywhere from 20,000 to 50,000 additional boardings. This is because there is heavier overall ridership in the WeHo area. Much of it comes from the senior citizens, but the trains will be used during mid-days and nights because of the nightlife. Don't forget, low-paying service jobs are jobs, too. WeHo and Fairfax provide thousands more of these at more hours. Also, is parking a nightmare? Thought so. The subway, along with high-frequency bus service that exists right now, makes public transit very attractive in such an area.

So, a West Hollywood alignment is not unreasonable. Actually, it should be the preferred alternative.

[1] Posted by: Wad | July 20, 2007 11:23 PM

I made a google map with similar intentions. Check out the Traffic Dodger Blue Line:

<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&om=1&msa=0&msid=118224662423249406389.00000111e4aa171462a8e&ll=34.020597,-118.398058&spn=0.528138,0.933838&z=10>

[2] Posted by: guest | July 25, 2007 7:02 PM

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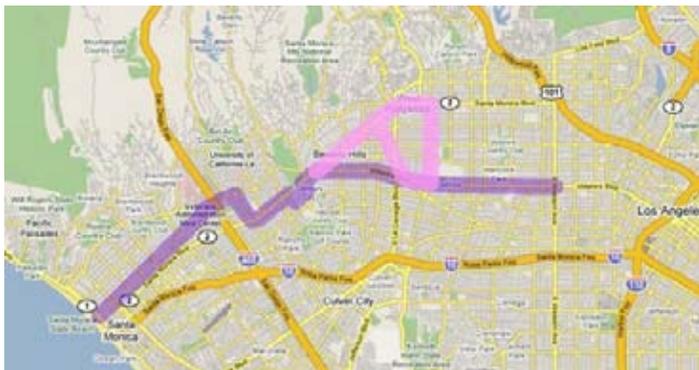


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JULY 24, 2007

Wilshire Subway Watch: Wilshire or WeHo? Vote on our new LAist Poll!



There's been [some talk](#) of making the Purple Line subway for Wilshire Blvd. actually veer off and go through West Hollywood or even making an additional line, say the Pink Line. As [Wad explains on MetroRiderLA](#):

The Purple Line is a 21-hour system committed to solving a 6-hour problem. The bulk of ridership would be coming from rush-hour work trips. But the offices generate very little activity during mid-days and virtually none on weekends...

[snip]

WeHo, to its credit, has shown that it is ready for a major investment. Besides the miserable traffic, WeHo has multiunit residences, heavy pedestrian activity and some of the heaviest bus patronage in the county. WeHo would not need to be altered to become "transit-ready". Beverly Hills, on the other hand, sees minimal pedestrian activity along Wilshire Boulevard. What pedestrian activity does occur is along the touristy diagonal boulevards connecting Wilshire and Santa Monica. So, if the subway were to go through WeHo first, it would actually deliver pedestrians closer to these streets via Santa Monica than Wilshire.

So what do you say? Should the route stick to Wilshire Blvd. as traditionally spoken about, should it zig and zag for WeHo, should there be two separate lines, or something else? Vote below!

Which should the route be for the Purple Line Subway?

Straight Shot: Strictly Along Wilshire Blvd. 13% (74 votes)

Zig-Zag: Needs to Serve WeHo and other high usage spots, even if it adds an extra 10-minutes. 26% (149 votes)

Two Separate Lines: Purple Line & Pink Line 61% (352 votes)

other 2% (12 votes)

TOTAL VOTES: 575

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[Map by Wad of MetroRiderLA](#)

By [Zach Behrens](#) in [LAist Polls](#) | [Link](#) | [Comments \(10\)](#) | [Recommend this!](#) (5) | [+](#)

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COMMENTS (10) [HIDE GUEST COMMENTS]

I've changed my mind a bit on this because of something Bert Green said in the comments of the MetroRider post:

"Right now, downtown and Hollywood are densifying at an amazing rate. I don't believe that would have happened had the Red, Gold and Blue Lines not been built. It is probably a matter of time before growth in employment follow, as a result of the demand generated by a transit-friendly environment."

At first I was of the side that said "zig zag", but the destinations in WeHo are not necessarily permanent, the Purple Line will be. Let the destinations grow from the transit, as Bert said.

[1] Posted by: [fredcamino](#) | July 24, 2007 11:46 AM

No use for the purple line on the weekends? We inner city folks would love to go to the beach without using a car! Most of the Eastside/East LA kids I know never go to the beach 'cause it takes like 2 and half hours on the bus.

[2] Posted by: [guest](#) | July 24, 2007 2:54 PM

regarding the beach, the Santa Monica Big Blue Bus 10 picks you up in downtown, then hops on the ten and drops you off in santa monica right by the beach, usually in 20-30 minutes with no stops between downtown and santa monica.

a million times better than the 720.. but it stops coming back eastward pretty early.

[3] Posted by: [Matthew Walsh](#) | July 24, 2007 6:04 PM

I made a Google Map of my own conceptual Metro line (the Traffic Dodger Blue Line) that would serve WeHo and other high density neighborhoods. Check it out:

<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?hl=en&ie=UTF8&msa=0&msid=118224662423249406389.00000111e4aa171462a8e&ll=34.020597,-118.398058&spn=0.791062,1.2854&z=10&om=1>

[4] Posted by: [guest](#) | July 24, 2007 10:13 PM

Why not have a spur of the Red Line past Hollywood? That would make more sense.

[5] Posted by: [guest](#) | July 25, 2007 2:32 PM

and follow Sunset to UCLA.

[6] Posted by: [guest](#) | July 25, 2007 4:43 PM

I live close to the Western/Wilshire Redline stop. I've dreamed of the subway going all the way down to Santa Monica via Wilshire. But I've always envisioned other lines, too. One going down Santa Monica Blvd and meeting up with Sunset and going to Union Station and on to East Los Angeles, but I'll probably never live long enough to see any of it happen. Los Angeles and its environs will never be on par with cities like New York, Paris, London or other cities with great subway systems, unless we get our act together and build a great subway system that BEST SERVES the people of greater Los Angeles and not let politics get in the way.

[7] Posted by: [guest](#) | July 25, 2007 4:56 PM

You could make the same argument about any number of neighborhoods. For the subway to really be appealing to the people who aren't already dependent on transit it needs to get from downtown to Santa Monica along the most direct route possible while still hitting major employment centers. Because of the density of offices along Wilshire (and in Century City on Santa Monica Blvd), and the residential density within a few miles of either side of the proposed line, that route makes the most sense. I agree that over time development will occur around the stops anyway.

Neighborhoods not directly on the Purple Line route could easily be served by short-distance buses w/ frequent service, like Dash, that would go to the nearest stations.

Right now just getting the Wilshire line funded and built will be a challenge enough. Let's not get ahead of ourselves and talk about spurs or other expensive diversions.

[8] Posted by: [guest](#) | July 25, 2007 6:40 PM

It would be awesome if, at some point, there was a subway through West Hollywood. But for now, speaking as someone who's had to drive east through West LA at 5 pm, where it's desperately needed is along Wilshire. Trying for a spur route would just ensure each project would be built much more slowly, while diverting the route would not only be more expensive but also make the trip more time-consuming - exactly the problem the subway is trying to solve. There should be one kink in the route - it would be silly for the subway not to go through Century City - but from Western to Santa Monica Blvd., and from Westwood Blvd. to the sea, should be along Wilshire.

And as for BH - what's the problem if most of the pedestrian traffic is along the streets coming off of Wilshire, rather than Wilshire itself? As long as the stops are at the most popular streets, then of course people will use the subway.

[9] Posted by: [guest](#) | July 25, 2007 8:39 PM

"At first I was of the side that said "zig zag", but the destinations in WeHo are not necessarily permanent, the Purple Line will be. Let the destinations grow from the transit, as Bert said."

That is such a BS argument because if that is the case then the office buildings in some parts of Wilshire aren't permanent either! And if you're spending \$5 Billion dollars to create "future" destinations rather than highlight the ones we do have near the route and densify THOSE (Ain't that Smarter growth) then we would really have a usable transit system that will people will use most of the time and that will get people to clamor for more of it!

This suggestion of "Oh the people can transfer onto shuttles or other buses due north" is silly since the North-South crossing traffic on Wilshire is worse than Wilshire itself making those destinations right near Wilshire downright unattractive to transit because of this distance/transfer/trip time factor thus reducing the benefits this subway would have.

[10] Posted by: [guest](#) | July 26, 2007 6:43 AM

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JULY 25, 2007

Zuma Dogg Polls: To fund the 'Subway to the Sea' or not? Plus LAUSD...

Guest Day Editor Zuma Dogg will be joining LAist with a few posts throughout the day. Read his [introductory interview](#) here and check out [his site](#) as well as [Mayor Sam](#) where he contributes. He also [wrote an article](#) in the current edition of the LA Weekly



The city and state are basing some of their major plans on the fact that you are going to vote to approve more bond money out of your checking account to pay for the transportation they haven't yet built to accommodate all the high density housing they have already started. (And traffic is already bad enough.)

So if the city feels "subway to the sea" and high-speed "magic bullet trains" are part of the plan, are you willing to vote for the billions and billions it will cost, that you will have to pitch in for?

School construction: If LAUSD came to you and said, "Will you vote for more bond money to build more schools." How would you vote:

Photo by Zach Behrens/LAist

By [ZumaDogg](#) in [Education](#) , [LAist Polls](#) , [Wilshire Subway/Purple Line](#) | [Link](#) | [Comments \(12\)](#) | [Recommend this! \(3\)](#) | [\[+\]](#)

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COMMENTS (12) [\[HIDE GUEST COMMENTS\]](#)

I'd get out there and start digging today if they'd let me.

[1] Posted by: [fredcamino](#) | [July 25, 2007 12:49 PM](#)

I can bring a golden shovel and a camera.

[2] Posted by: [LA Bus Girl](#) | [July 25, 2007 1:20 PM](#)

Not a very fairly worded question, was it? I'm disappointed.

How about phrasing it like this:

"Would you be willing to make a tiny investment that will finally get cars off the road, reduce traffic, improve air quality, and make Los Angeles a world-class city? Or would you rather give away tax dollars to Hollywood studio execs, who will be making billions this year without our help?"

[3] Posted by: [guest](#) | [July 25, 2007 1:25 PM](#)

Thank you Fred, I feel the exact same way... how about MetroRiderLA spearheading a movement to do just that: volunteer labor for the subway to the sea ought to bring down the costs just a *little*, right?

[4] Posted by: [guest](#) | [July 25, 2007 1:42 PM](#)

Should we start rounding up the hard hats and orange vests? This could be a new campaign... guerilla public works projects.

[5] Posted by: [LA Bus Girl](#) | [July 25, 2007 2:18 PM](#)

lolz la bus girl. i can bring one shovel and any number of random tools. i went crazy one day about a year go and bought a load of stuff from home depot. anyone got one of those laser things that sit on a tripod and are orange, or we could just eye ball it.

[6] Posted by: [tykeCjohanson](#) | [July 25, 2007 3:17 PM](#)

and yes, i'd be more than happy and would most def vote for a tax that would go directly to public transit and no place else tho i fear such an opinion is the minority.

[7] Posted by: [tykeCjohanson](#) | [July 25, 2007 3:18 PM](#)

We can lift some of those cones/placard thingies, so people don't run us over while we're in a trench.

[8] Posted by: [LA Bus Girl](#) | [July 25, 2007 3:36 PM](#)

one of those trucks with the blinky arrows would help in that department too. let's lift one of those as well.

[9] Posted by: [lisa](#) | [July 25, 2007 3:54 PM](#)

Hell yeah I'd vote for a bond measure/tax increase to pay for the subway -- if I knew it was going to go to the subway and nowhere else.

I'd prefer it only go to Westwood and provide a connection to the Expo Line (North/South from Westwood to LAX?).

Rico A

[10] Posted by: [guest](#) | [July 25, 2007 5:49 PM](#)

They already take half my paycheck and I see no progress, only maintenance. Go ahead, just take 2/3 and give me results.

[11] Posted by: [guest](#) | [July 25, 2007 6:56 PM](#)

Rico: that's why we have to build it ourselves...

[12] Posted by: [LA Bus Girl](#) | [July 26, 2007 8:36 AM](#)

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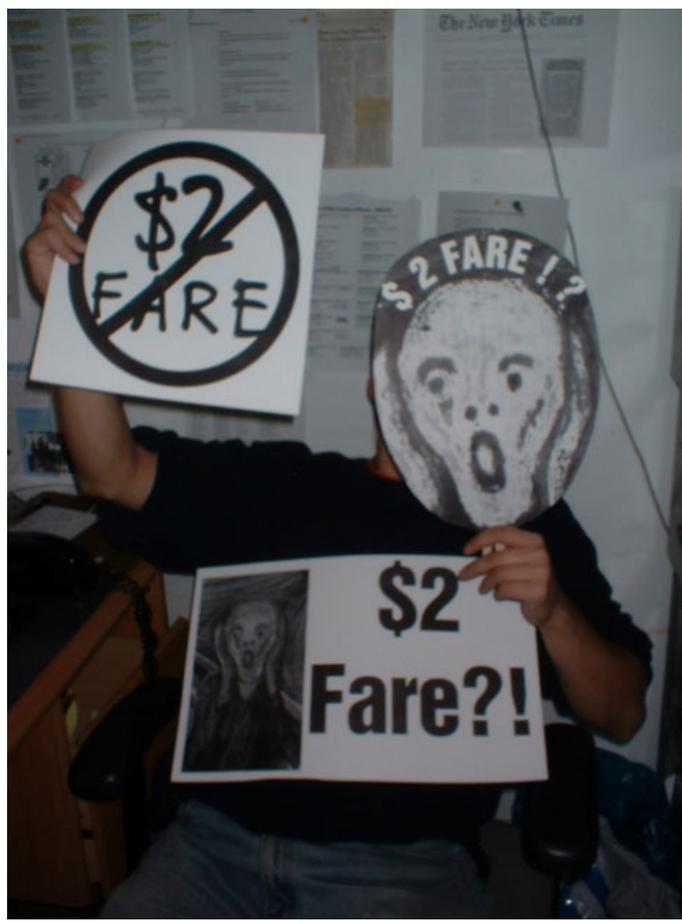
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SATURDAY, AUGUST 18, 2007

An environmental movement I can get with.



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 - Louis Armstrong. The Platinum Collection.
 - A Venezuela striving for democracy.
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- Popular forum discussions.**
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 - Dilemma of the Metaphorical Mulatto
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 - Liberator Story Ideas
 - Black America's "Issues": Structural or Cultural?
 - Baca, Rest In Peace
 - Bookworms unite.



See, it's not that we don't care about the environment, it's simply that there are quite a few issues higher up on our totem poles of priorities than buying t-shirts, watching documentaries and switching lightbulbs (even though they may be valid actions). This is one of them. You can't tell nobody to change a lightbulb unless you're willing to help them with that \$6-8 daily commute. Talk about global climate change... It's oftentimes cheaper to drive in New York than to take the train! When \$3 dollars gets you 20+ miles in a car and only 1.5 subway fares, something is definitely wrong. Isn't affordability the whole point of public transportation?

(Black Agenda Report) Fighting Transit Racism: Building the Environmental Movement on the Buses of L.A.: A Latina woman addresses the board of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). She is part of a crowd of 1,500 people opposing the agency's proposed bus-fare increases. She holds her 3-year-old child up to the board and says, "What would you like me to do? Take the clothes off his back or the food out of his mouth?"

L.A., with 10 million people and 7 million cars on the road, is the freeway capital of the U.S. For more than 14 years, the MTA on one side and the Strategy Center and Bus Riders Union (BRU) on the other have been fighting over the future of L.A.'s public transportation - a fight with important implications for the future of the environmental movement. The heavyweight bout has grown more high-profile this year. Despite massive opposition, on May 24, 2007, the MTA board of directors voted to raise the daily bus fare from \$3 to \$5 a day and the cost of a monthly bus pass from \$52 to \$62 a month. This is just the first step in a draconian trajectory that will, if not stopped, push the monthly bus pass to \$75 and then \$90, force many low-income people off the buses, and compel people to use or buy old cars instead of taking public transit. These policies will increase toxic air pollution and greenhouse-gas emissions, and make the bus riders poorer while making rail contractors richer.

The fight over the fare hikes has become a cause célèbre. The Bus Riders Union and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) are in state court trying to reverse the fare hikes on environmental grounds. The BRU is also in front of the federal courts asking for a five-year extension of a federal civil-rights consent decree controlling MTA actions. Dozens of BRU organizers are on the buses, talking to thousands of bus riders, holding community meetings to plan our next countermove. The fight to reverse those fare increases, buy more buses, and stop future money-sucking rail projects is far from over. This dramatic expansion in the breadth and impact of the environmental movement in L.A. could be a model for urban coalitions throughout the U.S.

The Backstory

The MTA board has 13 unelected members who get the job, and control of a \$3-billion-a-year budget, by dint of having won other elected offices - and who operate like a royal court. It includes all five members of the L.A. County Board of Supervisors, four members of the League of Cities, and Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and three of his appointees. The MTA's primary customers are 500,000 daily bus riders - 58 percent Latino, 22 percent Black, 8 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 12 percent white. More than 60 percent are women, and more than 75 percent have family incomes ranging from \$12,000 to \$20,000 a year. These are the hotel and restaurant workers, the domestic and service workers, the security guards, Korean and Jewish grandmothers, the elderly, the disabled, the students going to high school and community college -- the low-income working class of color, the salt of the earth. These are the core constituents of the Bus Riders Union, which was born in 1992 with the audacious slogan, "Billions for Buses."

The MTA has fought tooth and nail against investing in the bus system that so many of the city's residents depend on, preferring instead to build costly and little-used rail lines to serve the wealthier suburbs and a coterie of contractors and contributors. In 1994, the MTA tried to pay for its wasteful, over-budget train lines - corporate development projects masquerading as transportation - at the literal expense of the bus system. They voted to raise the daily bus fare from \$1.10 to \$1.35 and eliminate the \$42-a-month bus pass altogether. This could have created chaos for low-income bus riders, some of whom take 100 rides a month; it might even have priced them out of public transit altogether. The BRU countered by initiating a civil-rights lawsuit charging the MTA with violating Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, in which the government is prohibited from allocating funds in a racially discriminatory manner. The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund went to federal district court and, to everyone's amazement, the court issued a temporary restraining order against the fare increases. The BRU was thrust onto a national stage; even though the ruling came during the height of the O.J. Simpson trial, many media outlets made it their lead story.

In 1996, the BRU signed a historic 10-year consent decree with the MTA. The MTA agreed to keep bus fares low (\$42 a month), get rid of highly polluting diesel buses, and expand the bus fleet with

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cleaner-running buses. Ten years later, the MTA had, in its own words, "the largest clean-fuel bus fleet in the U.S." The agency replaced 2,000 dilapidated diesel buses with 2,000 compressed-natural-gas buses, and expanded the fleet by an additional 500 buses as well. The BRU had won its early demand of "Billions for Buses," securing more than \$2.5 billion in bus-system improvements over that decade. But it wasn't easy - the MTA dragged its heels at every opportunity, and in our view, still did not fully comply with the consent decree. The buses were still too crowded.

So in 2006, the BRU went to court to argue that the decree should be extended for five more years. The federal district court did not agree. We are appealing that decision to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Meanwhile, freed from the supervision of the federal courts, the MTA proposed dramatic increases to bus fares and cuts to bus service.

We called the proposed fare hikes racist because they would impose an unfair burden on low-income Blacks and Latinos, while subsidizing suburban rail lines that carry a higher percentage of white, affluent riders. Every day, we sent 15 to 20 BRU organizer/members on to the buses to warn and mobilize riders about the plan to raise fares. We reached several thousand people a day.

Outrage over the fare increase generated daily media coverage. On the English-language evening news, the story was, "Bus riders say bus fare is racist and pollutes the air. The poor can't afford it. MTA says it is a long overdue budget correction ... and in other news, a woman's cat was caught in a tree. Back to you, Polly." Spanish-language TV, in a county of 5 million Latinos, was huge. At least once a week the story was given feature coverage. "Today, the Sindicato de Pasajeros charges that the MTA is subsidizing new rail projects at \$250 million a mile with unfair fare increases that will hurt minorities and the poor." Cutaways to the bus, interviews with actual bus riders, and then, "Remember, the vote on these fare hikes will be Thursday, May 24, at 9:00 a.m." The Latino media really did its job.

But where were the votes we needed? L.A. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa had run as a "progressive" and built an impressive Black/Latino coalition in the city. He essentially has four votes on the MTA board - his own and those of his three appointees. But the mayor has been campaigning for a \$7 billion subway from right outside of the BRU office on Western and Wilshire down the Wilshire corridor to Santa Monica (the "subway to the sea"), while the BRU has an alternative plan, a bus-only-lanes rapid bus project throughout all of L.A. County, which could be implemented for less than \$2 billion and would serve half a million or more riders. The mayor also wants the expansion of freeways, while we're calling for a moratorium on freeway expansion. Our environmental strategies are at loggerheads. We knew that the mayor was not in favor of a drastic fare hike, but his own rail dreams contributed to the problem. He offered no support to us in the early stages. We planted more than 1,000 lawn signs around L.A. saying, in big, bold, red letters, "Mayor Villaraigosa: Stop the MTA's Racist Fare Hike." The mayor was well aware of the signs, once remarking to reporters that they were "all over the city."

We met with more than 100 community, civil-rights, labor, and environmental groups and generated a broad coalition in favor of expanding public transit, reducing auto use, and fighting the MTA fare hikes.

The Day of the Vote

On May 24 of this year, the MTA held a public hearing before voting on whether to raise bus fares. We hoped to get 500 people to the palatial MTA building, aka "the Taj Majal," for the hearing - this would have been the largest turnout for more than a decade. We told the MTA to secure overflow rooms and extra translators. The first 500 people were there before the doors even opened, and by 9:30 the fire marshals had to close the building as the crowd surged to more than 1,500. High school students staged an impromptu mock trial of the MTA as they occupied the lobby. Three hundred and fifty people testified at the hearing, perfecting the art of the 59-second diatribe so they would come in under the one-minute time limit. Black, Latino, and Korean women told the MTA that its fare hike was a crime - they literally had no extra money for bus fare. White environmentalists, for the first time, rallied to the cause, arguing that fare increases and service cuts would drive away the "choice" rider (that is, them) as well as the "transit-dependent" (that is, the urban poor of color who comprised 95 percent of the audience). For the first time, "Stop the rail projects" became a consensus issue, as the MTA had made clear that the whole purpose of the bus-fare increases was to pay for its rail addiction.

Finally, at 3:00 p.m., the mayor introduced a compromise motion - a lower level of fare increase, reducing service on some of the rail lines, and more creative financing to pay for future bus service in a way that would not require such fare increases. The board majority wasn't interested. They voted down his motion and then passed their own - an immediate increase in the cost of the daily pass from \$3 to \$5 and the monthly pass from \$52 to \$62, with a plan to raise the monthly-pass price to \$75 a month in two years.

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TECHNOLOGY.

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- african hiphop radio
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FOOD.

The crowd, still at 500 so late in the day, chanted, "Fight transit racism! See you in court!" and also, "Thanks, Mayor Villaraigosa, you gave it a good fight." (While the mayor's compromise motion was not what we had wanted, in politics you still have to understand in each battle who are your friends and who are your opponents.)

We were proud of our efforts and the bus riders themselves, but exhausted and frustrated to the point of tears - sad for bus riders who can ill afford the fare hike, furious at the undemocratic actions of elected officials in a class-based society.

But we were also truly hopeful - the embryo of an expanded environmental army had been formed. We have a growing alliance with the Natural Resources Defense Council - a major breakthrough in the politics of the environmental movement. In the past, Black and Latino working-class environmentalists and the fight for a first-class bus system have rarely gotten acknowledgment, let alone support, from the more affluent "white west side" of the city. Things are starting to change.

The Future

On June 27, we went into state court seeking an injunction to stop the fares on the grounds that they violate the California Environmental Quality Act. The BRU had sent 10 organizers out on the buses and got more than 100 depositions in which riders testified that the fare increases, often amounting to an additional \$50 a month for a family of five transit riders, would give them no choice but to buy an inexpensive, polluting auto and add to L.A.'s already noxious air pollution. The state court denied our motion for a temporary restraining order, but NRDC and BRU are moving forward and refining our case as we prepare for a full trial on the merits.

The day after the vote, a sympathetic aide in the mayor's office told us, "The board won the vote but you won the day. You set the terms of the debate, virtually all 1,500 people were on your side, and this was an amazing turnout. It is rare that people like us are impressed."

This is our challenge now: how to keep up the morale of the masses at a time when a major "transit" agency fiddles as the planet burns.

So, we pause a moment to appreciate our victories, take a deep breath, and meet to revise our campaign's tactical plan. Then, we get back on the bus, carrying out our next moves in this never-ending chess game of social change.

We will keep you posted. (source)

Labels: activism, environment, environmentalism, exploitation, livable wages, poverty, public transportation

.....

POSTED BY BRIAN | (PERMALINK)

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2 COMMENTS:

Mizzy said...

On the topic environment, with the exception of noteworthy environmental historians, most people see this part of the world as the "New World" and that, this is a place where people can do whatever they like. It's seen as a place waiting for "improvement" or as a place of pure hedonism. Do Americans consider this place home?

8/19/07 3:18 AM

brian said...

in truth, i consider the earth my home. but in a political sense it's very hard for me to consider america as my home.

8/19/07 3:32 PM

lunch by nature

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penn + teller: bullshit!
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the wire

RADIO.

alternative radio
kfai (radio without boundaries)
pacific radio
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the current 89.3

LITERATURE.

karibu books
medu books
third world press
word warriors press

HISTORY.

jeff chang
john g. jackson
john henrick clarke
leonard jeffries jr.
lorenzo dow turner
runoko rashidi
story of africa (bbc)
voices from the days of slavery
yosef ben-jochannan

PANAFRICAN BODIES.

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panafrican strategy and peace research group
western hemisphere african diaspora network

FINE ARTISTS.

art by zenobia
coba dance company
ernest bryant III
laughing at god
mandolux
melodee strong
neon butterfly
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obsidian eye photo
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omari wheat photography
onward + upward
soulistic playhouse
tchema arts
yams theatre

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artrujillo studio
circa gallery
clay squared
creative electric studios
fallout urban art center
frank stone gallery
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highpoint printmaking
icebox gallery
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New 'Subway to the Sea' route?



Source: Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Should the "Subway to the Sea" run through West Hollywood rather than the Miracle Mile and Hancock Park? The Times' Rong-Gong Lin [examines the issue](#):

After trying for three decades to build a subway down Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles County transit officials are now considering a radically different route that would send the Westside rail line through Hollywood, West Hollywood and the Beverly Center area. The new proposed alignment for the "Subway to the Sea" would extend west from the Hollywood/Highland Red Line station, roughly following Santa Monica Boulevard through Beverly Hills, a route that backers say should dip south to connect with the Beverly Center mall and Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. The new concept is still in its preliminary stages, and the Wilshire alignment remains on the table. But even though officials don't have funding for the \$6-billion project, the new concept has sparked much debate because of how crucial many officials see the subway to easing the Westside's traffic woes. The new route would bypass the Miracle Mile and Hancock Park, where opposition remains strong to a subway from residents in the upscale residential district. At the same time, officials and residents in Hollywood and West Hollywood are rolling out the welcome mat, saying the younger, apartment-living residents in that area would be more likely to take the subway.

November 05, 2007 | [Permalink](#)

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Listed below are links to weblogs that reference [New 'Subway to the Sea' route?](#):

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I agree with the call to build both. Find the funding. Get it done. And in the meantime, make pico and olympic one way streets from the ocean to downtown. Not after 5 years of studying the idea, but NOW. ASAP. At least until the subway is built. If you must do an impact study, start with a 5pm drive from Santa Monica to downtown. Hit wilshire on monday, santa monica on tuesday, olympic on wednesday, the 10 fwy on thursday and pico on friday - and the case will become crystal clear in less than a week.

Posted by: [Alvin](#) | November 14, 2007 at 09:11 PM

Why not build a streetcar on Santa Monica Blvd. and the subway down Wilshire (with a diversion to Century City) ? I picture something like the extremely popular F-Market streetcars in San Francisco. but we could use refurbished PCC "Red Cars." Streetcars

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- October 14, 2007 - October 20, 2007
- October 7, 2007 - October 13, 2007
- September 30, 2007 - October 6, 2007
- September 23, 2007 - September 29, 2007
- September 16, 2007 - September 22, 2007
- September 9, 2007 - September 15, 2007
- September 2, 2007 - September 8, 2007
- August 26, 2007 - September 1, 2007
- August 19, 2007 - August 25, 2007
- August 12, 2007 - August 18, 2007
- August 5, 2007 - August 11, 2007
- July 29, 2007 - August 4, 2007
- July 22, 2007 - July 28, 2007
- July 15, 2007 - July 21, 2007
- July 8, 2007 - July 14, 2007
- July 1, 2007 - July 7, 2007
- June 24, 2007 - June 30, 2007
- June 17, 2007 - June 23, 2007
- June 10, 2007 - June 16, 2007
- June 3, 2007 - June 9, 2007
- May 27, 2007 - June 2, 2007
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Purple Line planning

The MTA is holding a series of meetings in the Westside to [gather comments](#) about the idea of extending the Purple Line to Santa Monica. MTA officials are not passing around the hat (they don't have money for the \$6 billion project). Details and dates below:

All meetings are from 6-8 p.m. and will be at the following locations:

- **Tuesday, Oct. 9**, Emerson Middle School, 1650 Selby Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90024
- **Thursday, Oct. 11**, Pan Pacific Recreation Center, 7600 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036,
- **Tuesday, Oct. 16**, Wilshire United Methodist Church, 4350 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90005
- **Wednesday, Oct. 17**, Beverly Hills Public Library Auditorium, 444 N. Rexford Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90210
- **Thursday, Oct. 18**, Santa Monica Public Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90401

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If this Wilshire Purple Line is to even have a smidgen of usefulness to it, it needs to go away from Wilshire Blvd and serve the Farmers Market, Grove, Cedars Sinai, Beverly Center, Wilshire/Rodeo Drive, Century City and UCLA Westwood that way LA would have more users clamoring for a better transit network. One gold plated subway, does not a system make.

As for a straight line corridor, How come Santa Monica Blvd isn't mentioned? That is a much better candidate for a subway end to end. Or for cost-effectively link LA, West LA, Westwood and Santa Monica why not build a branch of the under construction Expo Line along the old Sepulveda Railroad right-of-way to UCLA Campus. The LRT line would have an immediate impact on relieving congestion and serve all of the off-campus apartment dwellers that live in Palms.

Posted by: [Jennifer Reyes](#) | [October 03, 2007 at 12:04 PM](#)

THERE ARE ALSO MEETINGS PLANNED FOR THE CRENSHAW/PRAIRIE CORRIDOR.

Metro is NOT publicizing those meetings, so you can bet your bottom dollar that they don't want people who live in Hawthorne, Inglewood, Baldwin Hills, and the Crenshaw District actually attending these meetings and commenting on anything.

The CRESHAW/PRAIRIE CORRIDOR MEETINGS ARE:

10/15/08, 6-8 pm at Darby Park--3400 W. Arbor Vitae St in Inglewood. Transit access via route 210.

10/17/2008, 6-8 pm at the Nate Holden Performing Arts Center, 4718 W. Washington Blvd in Los Angeles. Transit access via route 68.

10/20/08 (This is on SATURDAY) 9-11 AM, Audabon Middle School 4120 W. 11th Street. Transit access via route 40 or 42.

Look at Metro's information at

http://www.mta.net/projects_programs/crenshaw/default.htm. This is the ONLY item currently being addressed by the Long Range Plan with the potential to provide NORTH-SOUTH rail access anywhere in the county!

Posted by: [Sheryl](#) | [October 02, 2007 at 05:36 PM](#)

We need everyone there to get the MTA movin' on this!!

Posted by: [Simon](#) | [October 02, 2007 at 11:29 AM](#)

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[September 16, 2007 - September 22, 2007](#)
[September 9, 2007 - September 15, 2007](#)
[September 2, 2007 - September 8, 2007](#)
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[August 19, 2007 - August 25, 2007](#)
[August 12, 2007 - August 18, 2007](#)
[August 5, 2007 - August 11, 2007](#)
[July 29, 2007 - August 4, 2007](#)
[July 22, 2007 - July 28, 2007](#)
[July 15, 2007 - July 21, 2007](#)
[July 8, 2007 - July 14, 2007](#)
[July 1, 2007 - July 7, 2007](#)
[June 24, 2007 - June 30, 2007](#)
[June 17, 2007 - June 23, 2007](#)
[June 10, 2007 - June 16, 2007](#)
[June 3, 2007 - June 9, 2007](#)
[May 27, 2007 - June 2, 2007](#)
[May 20, 2007 - May 26, 2007](#)
[May 13, 2007 - May 19, 2007](#)
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Subway to a Sea of Red?



How to pay for the Subway to the Sea? The Times' Ari M. Bloomekatz and Steve Hymon paint a dark picture, **noting that internal polls** by the mayor's office find a sales tax or bond measure not faring well. There are some other ideas to pay the \$5 billion price:

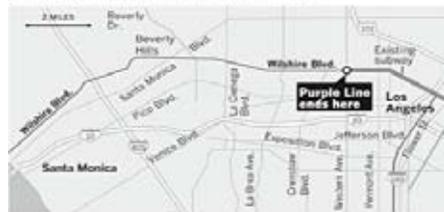
Midway through 2007 — with high turnouts expected for next year's presidential primary and general election — Villaraigosa has yet to produce a proposal to take to voters to help pay for the project. His aides say they are studying all possible scenarios. These include "benefit assessment districts" that would levy extra taxes on residents within half a mile of the subway line. Another idea is to find a private firm that could build and possibly operate the subway.

Still, some of backers are a little worries:

One vocal supporter of the subway is Jane Usher, president of the Los Angeles Planning Commission. Yet, Usher believes that the Westside line was closer to getting built when she worked as general counsel for Mayor Tom Bradley in the early '90s than now, when there is no consensus or funding plan in place. "I thought it was going to happen back then and then I watched the dismantling of consensus in the 1990s and replaced with so much less than was promised," Usher said. "Building a rail line takes a consensus and that consensus is bigger than the mayor, though I believe he can lead us in that direction — and I believe he is."

Subway stumbling blocks

The idea of a subway along Wilshire Boulevard to Santa Monica has been talked about for decades. But despite moves in Congress this week to lift a longtime ban on subway tunneling, the price tag remains a stumbling block.



Source: ESR, TeleAtlas, Metropolitan Transportation Authority
 Los Angeles Times

Meanwhile, there's a public meeting on the subway plan Tuesday (Details below)

Tuesday July 17 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Southern California Transit Advocates is sponsoring the second of a series of public meetings in the Wilshire corridor regarding the proposal to extend the subway (also known as the Purple Line) west to Westwood and eventually Santa Monica via the Miracle Mile, Beverly Hills and Century City. This will provide a venue for interested corridor residents to learn about the status of the proposal and

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- April 15, 2007 - April 21, 2007
- April 8, 2007 - April 14, 2007
- April 1, 2007 - April 7, 2007
- March 25, 2007 - March 31, 2007
- March 18, 2007 - March 24, 2007
- March 11, 2007 - March 17, 2007
- March 4, 2007 - March 10, 2007
- February 25, 2007 - March 3, 2007
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their role in its progress. Information will also be provided on how residents can engage in effective advocacy by contacting elected officials.

The event is free and open to the public and will be held in the Auditorium of the Beverly Hills Public Library, 444 North Rexford Drive at the corner of Rexford and Burton Way. Free parking is available at the structure on 450 N. Rexford Drive between North Santa Monica Boulevard and Burton Way.

Transit access is via MTA routes 4, 14, 16 and 316.

Grant funding for the meetings is provided by the American Public Transportation Association.

Dates, times and places for the other corridor meetings shall be announced shortly.

Further information: (213) 388-2364.

July 16, 2007 | Permalink

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New 'Subway to the Sea' route?



Source: Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Should the "Subway to the Sea" run through West Hollywood rather than the Miracle Mile and Hancock Park? The Times' Rong-Gong Lin [examines the issue](#):

After trying for three decades to build a subway down Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles County transit officials are now considering a radically different route that would send the Westside rail line through Hollywood, West Hollywood and the Beverly Center area. The new proposed alignment for the "Subway to the Sea" would extend west from the Hollywood/Highland Red Line station, roughly following Santa Monica Boulevard through Beverly Hills, a route that backers say should dip south to connect with the Beverly Center mall and Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. The new concept is still in its preliminary stages, and the Wilshire alignment remains on the table. But even though officials don't have funding for the \$6-billion project, the new concept has sparked much debate because of how crucial many officials see the subway to easing the Westside's traffic woes. The new route would bypass the Miracle Mile and Hancock Park, where opposition remains strong to a subway from residents in the upscale residential district. At the same time, officials and residents in Hollywood and West Hollywood are rolling out the welcome mat, saying the younger, apartment-living residents in that area would be more likely to take the subway.

November 05, 2007 | [Permalink](#)

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Why not do both if we can find the money and commitment? Just the idea excites me!

Posted by: David T | **November 08, 2007 at 04:26 PM**

How about both routes? They are both equally as important.

Posted by: matt | **November 07, 2007 at 07:06 PM**

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Posted by: matt | **November 07, 2007 at 07:06 PM**



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- November 4, 2007 - November 10, 2007
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- October 14, 2007 - October 20, 2007
- October 7, 2007 - October 13, 2007
- September 30, 2007 - October 6, 2007
- September 23, 2007 - September 29, 2007
- September 16, 2007 - September 22, 2007
- September 9, 2007 - September 15, 2007
- September 2, 2007 - September 8, 2007
- August 26, 2007 - September 1, 2007
- August 19, 2007 - August 25, 2007
- August 12, 2007 - August 18, 2007
- August 5, 2007 - August 11, 2007
- July 29, 2007 - August 4, 2007
- July 22, 2007 - July 28, 2007
- July 15, 2007 - July 21, 2007
- July 8, 2007 - July 14, 2007
- July 1, 2007 - July 7, 2007
- June 24, 2007 - June 30, 2007
- June 17, 2007 - June 23, 2007
- June 10, 2007 - June 16, 2007
- June 3, 2007 - June 9, 2007
- May 27, 2007 - June 2, 2007
- May 20, 2007 - May 26, 2007
- May 13, 2007 - May 19, 2007
- May 6, 2007 - May 12, 2007
- April 29, 2007 - May 5, 2007
- April 22, 2007 - April 28, 2007
- April 15, 2007 - April 21, 2007
- April 8, 2007 - April 14, 2007
- April 1, 2007 - April 7, 2007
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Purple Line ... to West Hollywood?



Well, we guess you can never plan far enough ahead. We've been telling you that plans for a Subway to the Sea have taken some hits in recent months (mainly because of the money). But that hasn't stopped a debate from beginning about whether the Wilshire-only route makes sense. LAist has been having a

discussion about whether the Purple Line should actually detour through West Hollywood via Santa Monica Boulevard to capture more potential riders. There's even a poll.

Of course, we can only assume that adding the West Hollywood extension would add several billion more dollars to the \$6-billion price tag. ***Do you like this new route?***

July 25, 2007 | [Permalink](#)

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"The bulk of ridership would be coming from rush-hour work trips. But the offices generate very little activity during mid-days and virtually none on weekends..."

This comes across as a narrow understanding of how the subway has changed and continues to change people's transportation habits. The Red Line is busy throughout the weekday and throughout the week (and surprisingly oftentimes on the weekends) and serves office workers downtown, the working class, tourists and everyone else.

The Purple Line extension, along its Wilshire route, would in fact be busy during the times mentioned and the ridership that the offices generate probably would amount to little mid-day and weekend activity. But how about the rest of the 100's of thousands who live on or near this route? The quote above fails to acknowledge them.

If that's the reasoning to steer the Purple Line through West Hollywood, than it is one coming from a narrow perspective.

Posted by: [Jean-Luc Turbo](#) | July 25, 2007 at 03:26 PM

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July 22, 2007 - July 28, 2007
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 July 8, 2007 - July 14, 2007
 July 1, 2007 - July 7, 2007
 June 24, 2007 - June 30, 2007
 June 17, 2007 - June 23, 2007
 June 10, 2007 - June 16, 2007
 June 3, 2007 - June 9, 2007
 May 27, 2007 - June 2, 2007
 May 20, 2007 - May 26, 2007
 May 13, 2007 - May 19, 2007
 May 6, 2007 - May 12, 2007
 April 29, 2007 - May 5, 2007
 April 22, 2007 - April 28, 2007
 April 15, 2007 - April 21, 2007
 April 8, 2007 - April 14, 2007
 April 1, 2007 - April 7, 2007
 March 25, 2007 - March 31, 2007
 March 18, 2007 - March 24, 2007
 March 11, 2007 - March 17, 2007
 March 4, 2007 - March 10, 2007
 February 25, 2007 - March 3, 2007
 February 18, 2007 - February 24, 2007
 February 11, 2007 - February 17, 2007
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Posted by: **Jean-Luc Turbo** | July 25, 2007 at 03:26 PM

they should just make it a spur off the purple line that would connect to the Red Line at Hollywood and Highland. making the purple line zig zag all over the place will not help with travel times that are meant to compete with the car.

Posted by: **Shaun** | July 25, 2007 at 02:49 PM

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From the Los Angeles Times

OPINION DAILY

Once I took the railroad...

Why nobody, but nobody will ever take mass transit as long as they have a choice.

By Matt Welch

October 3, 2007

In the beginning, I backed my words with shoe leather. Honest.

Despite all the [well-researched data reasonable people](#)

keep churning out, I've long been an enthusiast for publicly financed transit, particularly the least-flexible, most-expensive variety: digging billion-dollar tunnels under a famously sprawling and NIMBY-tastic county. I know and respect most of the arguments, but I also love the ride and the galvanizing effect the Metro seems to have had on transforming neighborhoods, particularly my backyard of Hollywood along the Red Line. Besides, name a great city that doesn't have a subway.

So when I got my first L.A. office job in 2006, I leaned enthusiastically into my [new daily commute](#) — a 14-minute, [0.7-mile walk](#) to the Red Line's [Vermont/Sunset stop](#), followed by a leisurely and contemplative ride down the [Observatory-themed station's](#) bottomless escalators, then (after maybe a three-minute wait) onto the train for the 12-minute jag to [Pershing Square](#), where I'd pip off one stop early so that I could breathe in the bustle of Broadway for [half a mile](#) before keeping the world safe for opinion journalism.

Average time, door to desk? A little less than 50 minutes. Which is fine, until you consider how far I actually live from work — five miles (or 10 minutes, according to [Mapquest](#)). Still, I got to read on the train ... except when there were no seats, which happened most every day. Also, catching a train back to Hollywood from the [Civic Center station](#) after 7 p.m. is a voodoo-inspiring exercise of waiting and hoping, with trains coming as infrequently as every 15 or 20 minutes — an experience made even more painful by the public art installation there, which consists of six humanoids flying overhead and blurting out irregular, eardrum-slicing chirp noises, libelously misdescribed on [this website](#) as "an occasional peaceful trill of a bird."

I started to experiment with shaving off minutes from the daily routine so that I could steal that crucial extra 10 minutes of sleep in the morning. Escalator reveries gave way to the grimy efficiency of the Vermont/Sunset elevator shaft. The Broadway bustle fell casualty to a [two-block walk](#) down Hill Street. Still, there were nearly 35 minutes built into the basic template, easily expandable to 45 and more if I just missed a train, or got caught in the multi-traffic-light [pedestrian hellscape](#) of the Hillhurst/Virgil/Hollywood/Sunset/Sunset Drive intersection, or simply came home late.

Thus I eventually learned what every person who actually has no *choice* but to ride mass transit has long known — the buses are much better.

The walk to my new bus stop was [a couple of clicks shorter](#)

as the pedestrian walks, with no terrible intersections and a bit of shade for the hot days. Two different heavily serviced bus lines took me by a much more direct route to the exact same Metro-stop location, only without the chirping humans to greet me and the long escalator up to civilization. The average door-to-door commute was down to a much more manageable 35 minutes.

I could even usually find a seat! But reading was usually not an option, due to the unpredictable shouting/silence cycle of the bus system's awful [Transit TV](#). But at least I could stare out the window and see beautiful Silver Lake and Echo Park whiz by. Well, except for the encrusted scum on the windows nine days out of 10. (Note to the MTA: I'll gladly pay an extra dollar per ride if you'd just mix in a squeegee now and then.) And worst of all, there are few transit hells as thirst-inducing as crawling up Sunset to meet your friends for dinner while coping with the traffic furies unleashed by the [Dodgers' inventive new parking system](#).

So it was with heavy heart that I began to drive to work. Or at least that's where this narrative seems to be leading. But a couple of little confessions are in order if we are to have a truly honest discussion about transit policy in the City of Angels:

1) For the first several months of my job, my car stood idle in my driveway, in need of repairs I was too lazy to arrange. So I didn't really have a choice while I was being "good."

2) Once I got the old T-bird running, I began to take the car in the morning whenever I needed to be somewhere not exactly on the Red Line after work — the movies, a friend's house, band practice.

This is where the rubber meets the road on all transit debates, and it's why there'll never be a lack of [stories](#) about how almost none of the region's public officials who have the most effect on transportation actually take the damned bus. People who *can* take their cars *will* take their cars, particularly if they're in a hurry or need to make multiple stops. As Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa explained his non-transit commuting to The Times in November 2006, "I'd like to do more, but my problem is I have to go all over the city. It's very tough because of my schedule." Sure. And it turns out many of us have hectic schedules as well.

At any given time, roughly 72% of the [commentary](#) about [transit](#) is based on the Invisible Rabbit of transit-oriented development and "sustainable growth": That what we *really* need to do is to "get people out of their cars." City observers — who I would bet out-drive the parents of public-school kids by a ratio of at least 2 to 1 — are perpetually surprised that their fellow car owners insist on using them, no matter how close they live to the spiffy new urban village. The following paragraph, from a [June 30 Times story](#) on the subject, needs to be seared on the forehead of every urban planner south of the Tehachapis:

But there is little research to back up the rosy predictions. Among the few academic studies of the subject, one that looked at buildings in the Los Angeles area showed that transit-based development successfully weaned relatively few residents from their cars. It also found that, over time, no more people in the buildings studied were taking transit 10 years after a project opened than when it was first built.

For eight years, I have chosen to live in neighborhoods in large part because of their walkability and proximity (via public transit) to the excitement of downtown and Hollywood. I support the mayor's "[subway to the sea](#)" without irony, no matter how many billions it takes. But as long as my drive to work is less than 15 minutes, you will not get me out of my 1986 car until traffic gets at least three times as bad. Or unless the engine craps out.

In the meantime, transit should be seen — and supported — for what is: A way for poorer people to get around until they become rich enough to buy a car. And an option for if (or when) the 101 ever really does become a parking lot.

Matt Welch is assistant editorial page editor; click [here](#) to read more of his Opinion Daily columns. Send us your thoughts at opinion@latimes.com.

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TUESDAY, AUGUST 28, 2007

Dystopia Now

Enormously important editorial in today's Daily News, the kind of editorial you don't see in newspapers too beholden* to real estate ads (hey---it's like they've been reading along!)

LOS Angeles' politicians want to Manhattanize downtown by relaxing rules on tall buildings and allowing super-small living spaces. They're ready to commit billions of dollars to a subway to the sea that won't be operational for decades. And they are gearing up to lift size-restriction limits on new residential buildings citywide, provided that the buildings include some affordable housing.

Hold on a moment.

All this speeding toward densifying L.A. with little preparation and mitigation should have the city's residents worried sick...

And why doesn't it?

I think in large part it's been because of what an abomination the Bush presidency has been. People in Hollywood, downtown, even on the westside can understand that abomination. They'll go to a protest rally every three months, see the right film, and feel like they're politically engaged.

But these same people will walk down their own block and see houses they can't afford, a homeless guy with a shopping cart, a couple of stray dogs and feral cats, and a forty-unit condo going up, *and not even wonder about how the hell all that has happened to their own block.*

15

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Melinda Bailey Review

« [Out of the box dating](#)

Ground Broken On Expo Line!

Jillian:

I'm a couple weeks late on this one...but I was just catching up on my Transit Nerd News, and found out that ground has been broken on the Expo Line! According to an August 11th Times article, officials expect to see 43,000 passenger boardings every weekday by 2025. The question is, where will the Expo line be by 2025? The Phase [One route](#) is already decided: an old Southern Pacific rail line, south of the 10, that is nowhere near many of the job-dense areas. But Phase Two is still up in the air, and it may be headed for the same fate as the "Beverly Hills Freeway" (the lack of which is partially responsible for the gridlock on the Westside that the Expo line is supposed to help with)

The Expo Line is supposed to follow the old Exposition Blvd. tracks, from the Washington at National terminal in Culver City, to the beach in Santa Monica. If so, the Expo Line would take the place of the "Subway to the [Sea](#)" - even though it is an above-ground train subject to the same traffic lights and slowdowns that the Gold Line is in South Pasadena. The original beach-bound train was actually supposed to run underground, along Wilshire Boulevard, a route that was eliminated by Senator Henry Waxman in the 80s after the 1985 methane gas explosion. Granted, at \$300 million a mile for a sub-Wilshire train line, the Expo line is far less expensive at a total of \$640 million. But can the Expo Line handle being the only train line to the ocean with a route that long from downtown?

Also, will that Expo Line route follow the old Expo tracks from Culver City, or will it have to take a longer route to skirt parts of residential West L.A. - especially the Cheviot Hills? The residents of the Cheviot Hills neighborhood do not want mass transit going through their backyards. Ironically, Cheviot Hills is plagued with traffic from Century City, which I learned today was built with access to the non-existent Beverly Hills freeway in mind. But the Expo Line wouldn't necessarily lighten that load, as it goes too far south of Century City and Westwood to be of any help. And even if the Expo line is allowed to run on the quicker route through the Cheviot Hills, travel time from downtown to that area would be as long or longer than taking buses, making it impractical even for those Century City or Westwood workers willing to take it most of the way to their offices.

Additionally, there is some question about whether the funding exists to get the Expo Line past Vermont. With so many cuts to the transportation budget, the same Times article says that the money might just not be there. The official Build Expo page doesn't mention any of these setbacks, even though it is the head of the Exposition Construction Authority who says that, without the \$314 million currently being held by the California Transportation Commission (as part of those budget cuts), the contracts for the next leg of Phase 1 cannot be awarded.

I'm still excited that ground has been broken though. I don't actually live on the Westside any more, but one of the advantages to moving east was access to better transit services. Also, while it wouldn't be much help for those commuters stuck in the congestion in Santa Monica and West L.A., it would definitely help some of the commuters on the 10 find alternate routes to work - or, for that matter, to the beach [in that distant day when](#) the last phases are complete.

This entry was posted on Monday, August 27th, 2007 at 12:48 pm and is filed under [Uncategorized](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can [leave a response](#), or [trackback](#) from your own site.

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MetroRiderLA

los angeles public transit lifestyle

Comment Deadline for Input on the Westside Extension Nov. 1

Posted by FredCamino in [Awareness](#), [News](#) on October 30, 2007 at 6:01 pm   

Tags: [metro](#), [los angeles](#), [transit](#), [westside](#), [westside extension](#)



All comments regarding the [Westside Extension Transit Corridor](#) must be submitted to [Metro](#) by November 1, 2007. You can send comments (including digital audio and video files) by email to WestsideExtension@metro.net. You can also use Metro's [web-based comment form](#) to leave your input over the internet. Comments can be left by phone by calling (213) 922-6934 and leaving a message. Comments sent by mail must be postmarked by November 1 and be sent to the following address:

David Mieger, Project Manager
Metro
One Gateway Plaza, MS 99-22-5
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Previous coverage:

- [Video Update on the Westside Extension](#)
- [Community Meeting: Westside Extension](#)
- [Westside Extension Transit Study Corridor Picture Report](#)

1 comment for Comment Deadline for Input on the Westside Extension Nov. 1 [»](#)

1. Sorry for the duplicate. I don't see an edit or delete function.

I haven't seen this show up on the blogs, but here is coverage of the October 29 MTA forum in West Hollywood for the Westside Extension Transit Corridor Study.

<http://wehnews.com/z/wehnews/archive/page.php?articleID=1845>

Council member John Heilman spoke after a presentation by Metro officials at the Plummer Park

Community Center, and said in no uncertain words that the Metro board seems to have prejudged the direction of the line.

He mentioned that a substantial station property operated by the Metro already existed in the city – the original Sherman Rail yard on which now stands a bus depot – that ought to figure prominently in the Metro’s expansion plans.

He also took umbrage to the apparent lack of concern the Metro has for Wehoans’ thoughts on the transportation subject. “It took our city’s demand that we be allowed to have input – Metro put this meeting together only at our insistence – and they seem to have already decided on the Wilshire route,” he said. “That doesn’t give us a fair shot at giving input.”

Another council member, Abbe Land, asked for old thought patterns to be swept aside in searching for the best answer. “We have to drop pre-conceived notions formed 15 years ago and think about this as being our future. We are planning for the next several decades.”

It sounds like there was thankfully one one speaker who worried about the subway bringing the “wrong people” to the community. Fortunately, that idea is dying off (literally).

Comment by Dan W. | 11-2-07 | [10:09 am](#)



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Community Meeting: Westside Extension

Posted by FredCamino in [Awareness](#), [Event](#) on October 24, 2007 at 5:54 pm   

Tags: [west hollywood](#), [metro](#), [los angeles](#), [westside](#), [community meeting](#)



The [City of West Hollywood](#) is sponsoring a community meeting to discuss the [Westside Extension Transit Corridor Study](#)

which aims to look at how to improve mobility on the Westside. Issues to be discussed include:

- Does transit need to be improved on the Westside?
- Do you prefer subway, light rail, more buses, or another mode?
- Do you like a Wilshire or a Santa Monica Boulevard alignment better?
- Do you want a station in your neighborhood?
- What is important to you in evaluating these alternatives?

The meeting will take place on **Monday October 29, 2007 from 6pm to 8pm at [Plummer Park](#), 7377 Santa Monica Boulevard.**

*Comments about the study may be received at the community meeting, or by filling out the comment form on the project website, leaving a message on the information line (213.922.6934) or by writing Mr. David Mieger, AICP, Project Manager and Deputy Executive Office, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (METRO), One Gateway Plaza, Los Angeles, CA 90012. **Comments must be received by November 1, 2007.***

No comments for Community Meeting: Westside Extension [»](#)

No comments yet.

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Video Update on the Westside Extension

Posted by FredCamino in [News](#), [Opinion](#), [MetroMovies](#) on October 29, 2007 at 10:07 am   

Tags: [west hollywood](#), [metro](#), [los angeles](#), [westside](#), [westside extension](#)



Metro has released [a new and informative video](#) covering the public scoping process of the Metro [Westside Extension Transit Corridor](#)

study. The 16-minute video, guided by Judy Litvak and David Mieger of Metro, describes the the area, the process, and the possibilities for the Westside Extension. Unfortunately the audio clips out of the video about 2/3 of the way through. I appreciate Metro attempting to communicate with its customers this way, it definitely beats midday meetings in far-off locales, but hopefully they nail down the technology better next time.

2 comments for Video Update on the Westside Extension [»](#)

1. I just wanted to let you know that we have corrected the technical difficulties with the on-line video of the Early Scoping presentation for this study. If you want to view the video or the Power Point presentation used at the meetings, please go to the study website at [and click on "News and Info."](#)

[Thanks.](#)

Comment by [Jody Litvak](#) / 10-31-07 / [10:04 am](#)



2. Thanks Jody!

Comment by [FredCamino](#) / 10-31-07 / [3:00 pm](#)



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Westside Alignment's Biggest Mistake

Posted by tykejohnson in [Opinion](#), [MetroLit](#), [Anecdotes](#) on November 7, 2007 at 9:47 am   



With all this talk about the Westside alignment, some heated, some humorous I feel that a great disservice is being made to the many fine residents of this city. And I'm not talking about the "obvious" crime element getting speedy and timely access to Los Angeles' upper gay echelon to do their misdeeds, nor is it our children's and baby's safety (like it is elsewhere, lolz) or environmental racism (again like it *actually* is elsewhere, lolz 2x). But something a great deal more important. Something far more drastic of an oversight than imaginable.

I'm talking about why the Westside connector Hollywood/Highland extension plans have no inclusion of the hot dog eatery, [Pink's](#). After all, as we learned from Bernard Parks' obsession with making the Aqua line called the Expo line after Exposition Park, the Los Angeles landscape is never changing and such things as businesses and parks last forever. Hence the designation of the Pink line going directly too Pink's hot dogs makes perfect sense. Where it should go after that is anybody's guess, maybe shoot east to Saddle Ranch and down to Canter's after that. But that's all for later, for now, lets just get the "Subway to Pink's" built. We all know the "Subway to the Sea" is a hapless adventure with little guaranteed rider ship. Where as Pink's, the rider ship is proven. Have you seen the line outside that place? That's nearly a train car full already. And as the slogan proves, build it and they will come.

And though I don't think it's entirely necessary, for their service to this city—as in finally giving us a good reason to extend the subway—is already enough, Pink's could even give a tiny percentage of their boosted revenue back to Metro. Maybe create a Pink's fund that pays for a Melrose/La Brea stop rotating art exhibit with themes just as FUN as Pink's hot dog names. One month could be an ode to Rosie O'Donnell, the next to Lord of the Rings. Just

think of all the culture we'd be bringing to this city if we just brought this city a much-needed "Subway to Pink's" to begin with. NYC, London, Tokyo, Paris, wouldn't know what hit them when they got a load of Los Angeles' cultural offerings.

In the end, what I care about most, and I'm sure what we all care about most, is what's best for this city. What's best for our children and what's best for our friends visiting that want an "only in LA" *cheap eat*. And the only way to do that is to build the "Subway to Pink's." For did we not name Washington DC after Washington? Los Angeles after the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim? Then why would we not name the Pink line after that actually good and not at all terribly overpriced and underwhelming hot dog establishment, Pink's? After all, a line down La Brea would be just as underwhelming.

14 comments for Westside Alignment's Biggest Mistake >>

1. Great bit of tongue-in-cheek writing there, Tyke.

Comment by [Kymberleigh Richards](#) / 11-7-07 / [10:43 am](#)



2. Bravo. Hilarious. "Subway to Pinks"... classic.

Comment by [FredCamino](#) / 11-7-07 / [10:49 am](#)



3. Sounds like a modest proposal.

Comment by [Miles](#) / 11-7-07 / [10:59 am](#)



4. It's unlikely the "Pink" Line, if and when it is constructed, will go to Melrose, but if there is a stop at LaBrea/Santa Monica as the City of West Hollywood would like, one could absolutely walk a short distance and "Take the Pink Line to Pink's!"

Comment by [Dan W.](#) / 11-7-07 / [11:05 am](#)



5. But it will stop at Century City which will give easy access to Pinkberry and Pink Taco.

Comment by [don hosek](#) / 11-7-07 / [2:25 pm](#)



6. Not to forget there would two Pinkberry's walking distance from a San Vicente/Santa Monica stop.

Comment by [Dan W.](#) / 11-7-07 / [2:39 pm](#)



7. This is a kind of a fun story and Pink's would be a great stop for a good lunch. But we need to keep our eyes on the prize. The line needs to be built down Wilshire ASAP as it is the heaviest corridor and needs the service.

Could this be a distraction and a monkey wrench in the works to slow down the line like the Venice Sepulveda detour on the Expo Line was to slow or stop it? With out this detour the line would now be complete for the same amount of money to Santa Monica as it is taking to get to Culver City.

This same strategy could delay or even stop the subway to the sea and would certainly delay it's start of construction and drive up cost.

An elevated LRT or Monorail line from the Hollywood Highland Station Red Line Station to West Hollywood, Pinks, Beverley Hills and to Century City could do the job for a lot less and the Wilshire subway would not be delayed.

Alan Fishel

Comment by Alan Fishel | 11-9-07 | [4:16 pm](#)



8. Could this be a distraction and a monkey wrench in the works to slow down the line like the Venice

Sepulveda detour on the Expo Line was to slow or stop it? With out this detour the line would now be complete for the same amount of money to Santa Monica as it is taking to get to Culver City. This same strategy could delay or even stop the subway to the sea and would certainly delay it's start of construction and drive up cost.

Those of us who fervently believe in the "Pink Line" do not see this as a distraction, but as a vitally important project. If the Pink Line is proposed as an LRT, I don't think that would be objected to by many who want a rail line of some sort built. The Pink Line has even been mentioned as a possible northern branch of the Crenshaw Line as an LRT, going up San Vicente to Santa Monica and then cutting over to Hollywood/Highland, in addition to the idea of a Hollywood/Highland to Century City extension. I like the idea of it going from H/H to LaBrea/Santa Monica then to LaCienega/Santa Monica to the LaBrea stop of the Expo Line as a vital north/south link.

While I agree with everyone who believes the Purple Line is the first priority, that doesn't mean that Pink Line supporters are throwing a wrench into the works.

It came as a surprise to the MTA and probably to others how much support there is for some sort of Santa Monica Blvd. project, whatever modality that turns out to be.

It makes sense that the civic leaders in West Hollywood would work to try and ensure their city wasn't left out of the rail system altogether as may have seemed likely if they hadn't lobbied to get the MTA's attention. They at least have the MTA's attention that there is need and popular support for something.

I would expect the City of WeHo and other Pink Line supporters to keep lobbying for it. However, I wouldn't fear it. After 20 years of waiting, I cannot conceive the MTA will not go for the Wilshire alignment first.

I certainly think that what the Pink Line supporters are doing is more constructive to public transit advocacy than what FixExpo is doing.

I wonder if the MTA has the right to kick off those parking structures on their former track land in Beverly Hills. Beverly Hills doesn't seem to want a Santa Monica Blvd. stop at this time. If some Pink Line modality is built, it seems those who lobbied for a Beverly Connection / Cedar Sinai stop will be in luck and those who have their hearts set on taking rail to the Grove may not be, but who knows at this point.

I'm a believer in a rising tide lifting all boats. The more interest there is in mass transit anywhere in So. Cal. helps the cause of mass transit everywhere in So. Cal.

Comment by Dan W. | 11-9-07 | [9:14 pm](#)



9. There is a big difference between Pink Line supporters and the Cheviot Hills NIMBY trying to get the Expo

line detoured to Venice-Sepulveda.

The support for the Pink Line is genuine and comes from the people who live and work and play in those communities and genuinely want it. It is not being proposed as an alternate route by the Hancock Park old guard trying to stop the Purple Line.

I have yet to hear anyone who supports the Pink Line to say it should be built INSTEAD of the Purple Line. The fact that any part of So. Cal. wants mass transit and will lobby for it is something to celebrate, IMO.

As a side note, Beverly Hills has a preference for the Wilshire alignment, so it's politically easier at this point to go forward with that.

As much as I would love to ram a Crenshaw Blvd. stop down the throats of people in Hancock Park who have been fighting a subway for years, perhaps the MTA should put off committing to building a Crenshaw stop just to get the line built and through. But that's for another thread.

Comment by Dan W. / 11-9-07 / [9:55 pm](#)



10. dan, in no way was this post meant to mock the public efforts and needs for the pink line down sm/fairfax/san vicente or wherever it may end up going (aside from the proposal to go down la brea). i think everyone on this would agree (minus rob dawg of course) that a pink line is not only desirable but necessary for a future LA. and i agree also, that it doesn't thwart the efforts of the purple line either. 1 is not the answer, 2 is for sure, and there's no reason to say we can only have the purple and nothing else. i'm all for an EIR on a possible Pink as well as breaking ground on the damn purple already. And to hell with Hancock park NIMBY bitches. if we have to skip that stop for now just to get it built go with it, in 5 years time they'll be begging for one.

Comment by [tykejohnson](#) / 11-10-07 / [1:16 pm](#)



11. dan, in no way was this post meant to mock the public efforts and needs for the pink line down sm/fairfax/san vicente or wherever it may end up going

Oh, I know that. I loved the hilarious, tongue-in-cheek post. 😊

I was just reassuring Alan Fishel that the Pink Line is in no way an attempt to slow down and throw a monkey wrench in completing the Purple line.

Comment by Dan W. / 11-10-07 / [8:44 pm](#)



12. I have yet to hear anyone who supports the Pink Line to say it should be built INSTEAD of the Purple Line.

I have, Dan, and it's scary to listen to them.

Comment by [Kymberleigh Richards](#) / 11-11-07 / [5:18 pm](#)



13. And if the Pink Line served Century City, the employees of MGM/UA which has the rights to the Pink Panther movie franchise would also be able to ride!

Comment by Erik / 11-11-07 / [10:59 pm](#)



14. That would be great advertisement.

Seeing the Pink Panther sitting on the Pink Line with his tail waiving in the air riding it to MGM/UA.

The advertisement simply writes itself.

Comment by Dan W. | 11-12-07 | [9:47 am](#)



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12 13 [14](#) [15](#) 16 17 18

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los angeles public transit lifestyle

Westside Extension Transit Study Corridor picture report

Posted by Wad in [News](#), [Anecdotes](#) on October 17, 2007 at 2:00 am   

Tags: [los angeles](#), [public transit](#), [southern california transit advocates](#), [transit coalition](#)



About 60 people attended [Metro's Westside Extension Transit Study Corridor](#) meeting at the Wilshire United Methodist Church in Windsor Village on Tuesday night. Only about 15 people signed up to give public comments, limited to two minutes.

According to Metro staffers and the transit advocates attending the other series of meetings, this had the smallest attendance so far. The Emerson Middle School and Pan Pacific meetings drew closer to 100 each. Metro's anticipating more comments coming in by mail and e-mail.

In this meeting, as in the past two, sentiment is *very much in favor* of extending the subway to the sea. And this is the meeting closest to the neighborhoods that have provided the wealthiest, most concentrated and unabashedly racist opposition to public transportation.

A few of the homeowners' associations representatives appeared here. A couple of them expressed concern over construction impacts, and opposition to bus-only lanes. One person was opposed to building a station at Wilshire and Crenshaw boulevards.

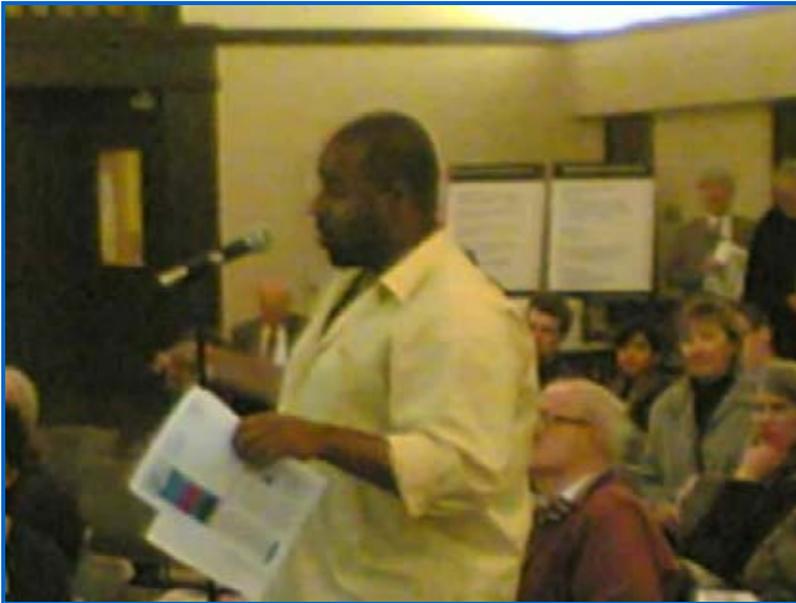


Dana Gabbard of the [Southern California Transit Advocates](#) gets up to speak. He spoke for himself, not for the group. He lives, works and relaxes on Wilshire Boulevard, and stated in his comments that heavy rail is necessary because of the speed and capacity advantages.

He did not recruit guests to Socata.



Not so for Bart Reed. The Transit Coalition's executive director was there as an observer, not a speaker. He was actively networking with the crowd and handed out copies of this month's [Moving Southern California](#).



Another Transit Coalition official representin' was Jerard Wright, the group's vice president. He's also affiliated with Metro, as a member of the [Westside/Central Service Sector Governance Council](#). He, though, was here in the role of citizen.

He suggested a few corridors to study besides Wilshire, including interfacing the Crenshaw/Prairie project with a Purple Line extension.



And another interesting transit advocacy/Metro connection: architect Anthony Loui was a Socata member who's now, per his business card, project manager of transportation development and implementation at the agency. He stands by project maps showing satellite images of the areas studied. If anything gets built, Loui will help draw up blueprints.

No comments for Westside Extension Transit Study Corridor picture report »

No comments yet.

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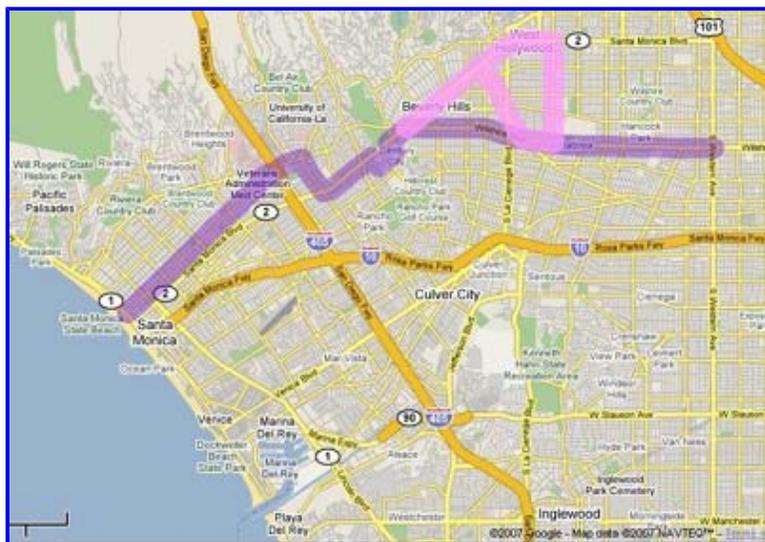
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los angeles public transit lifestyle

Westside subway ... umm, transit alternatives meetings

Posted by Wad in [Awareness](#), [News](#), [Event](#) on September 30, 2007 at 1:30 am

Tags: [los angeles](#), [mta](#), [beverly hills](#), [santa monica](#)



Pick any one of these three lines to be built as a subway. Hell, go for all three why not.

[Metro](#) invites the public to validate the obvious — extending the [Purple Line](#) to the sea — and give token consideration to other multibillion-dollar investments for Westside projects [at a series of meetings in October](#).

By law Metro has to consider from several alternative modes in order to receive funding. These can include, subway, bus-only lanes, subway, surface light rail, subway, aerial light rail, subway, elevated Purple Line extension, subway, the do-nothing alternative or subway. Metro set up a [web site](#) for this study. The study area boundaries are the subway stations at Hollywood/Highland and Wilshire/Western to the east, Pico Boulevard to the south, the sea to the west, and more or less the Santa Monica Mountains to the north.

For those too busy or lazy to attend one of the meetings in person, Metro accepts e-mail and letters and as public comment. Send e-mail to WestsideExtension@metro.net. To leave a message, call (213) 922-6932. For snail mail, send to:

Mr. David Mieger, AICP
Project Manager and Deputy Executive Officer
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro)
Mail Stop: 99-22-5

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012

The deadline for receiving comments is November 1. Remember that.

The list of meetings follows the jump.

All meetings are 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Tuesday, October 9, Emerson Middle School, [1650 Selby Avenue](#), West Los Angeles
Transit access: Metro Rapid line [704](#), Local line [4](#) and [Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus](#) lines 1, 8 and 12/Super 12.

Thursday, October 11, Pan Pacific Recreation Center, [7600 Beverly Boulevard](#), Los Angeles, CA 90036
Transit access: Metro Rapid lines [714](#) and [780](#), and Local lines [10](#), [14](#), [16/316](#), [217](#) and [218](#); and [LADOT DASH Fairfax](#).

Tuesday, October 16, Wilshire United Methodist Church, [4350 Wilshire Boulevard](#), Los Angeles, CA 90005
Transit access: Metro Rapid lines [710](#) and [720](#), and Local lines [20](#) and [210](#).

Wednesday, October 17, Beverly Hills Public Library Auditorium, [444 N. Rexford Drive](#), Beverly Hills, CA 90210
Transit access: Metro Rapid lines 704 and 714, and Local lines 4, 14 and 16/316.

Thursday, October 18, Santa Monica Public Library, [601 Santa Monica Boulevard](#), Santa Monica, CA 90401
Transit access: Metro Rapid line 704, and Express line [534](#); and Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus lines 1-10 (except Line 6).

No comments for Westside subway ... umm, transit alternatives meetings »

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Subway to the Sea, Hollywood or Wilshire to Santa Monica

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Nov 3 2007, 07:45 PM

Post #1

MoGraph Regular

Group: Members

Posts: 65

Joined: 22-July 06

Member No.: 3,903

Was reading an article about a proposed change in where it connects to the Red Line:
<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-ra...=la-home-center>
http://subwaytothesea.org/assets/images/ma...ap_1280x612.gif (original route map?)

Which ever route gets approved I really hope they build this thing as traffic congestion to and from West LA is out of control.

[TOP](#)[QUOTE](#) [REPLY](#) [laughingcolors](#)

Nov 3 2007, 08:21 PM

Post #2

MoGraph Demi-god

Group: Members

Posts: 508

Joined: 22-July 06

From: *BRENTWOOD*

(westsiddde)

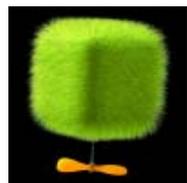
Member No.: 3,874

and its just as bad on weekends no matter what time of day

[TOP](#)[QUOTE](#) [REPLY](#) [monovich](#)

Nov 3 2007, 08:28 PM

Post #3



MoGraph Megastar

If they build a subway out to the westside, it could actually revolutionize the city. I know I would use it.

maybe they could pause the war on iraq for a day and spend the money on this instead, which is pocket change in comparison.

edit: typo.

Group: Members
 Posts: 238
 Joined: 24-July 06
 Member No.: 4,058

This post has been edited by **monovich**: Nov 3 2007, 08:30 PM

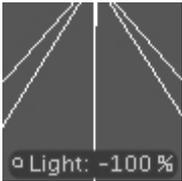
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[+ QUOTE](#) [REPLY](#)

 **govinda**

Nov 3 2007, 10:05 PM

Post #4



Mograph Deity

Group: Admin
 Posts: 914
 Joined: 25-July 06
 From: Yerevan, Los Angeles
 Member No.: 4,187

Los Angeles wasn't built around the car, as many people think. It was built around the street car, the first great city to be built that way. Then along came Judge Doom, spreading simoleons to the local judges, and we get the freeway system. ☹

This is a map of the original Red Car lines from 1910. You can see that there's another dynamic at work back then. LA was built along the axis of Downtown-to-Long Beach, because of shipping and such, and Downtown-to-Pasadena because the rail barons put their terminals up there, I guess. West LA was bean fields until the 30s. People didn't value the beach until the 50s and 60s, which is evident in the way that you still find so many little 50s slum-houses scattered near the beach in Santa Monica. So when the dynamic changed to be westside-centric, it fed into the new transportation model (the car) also.

Here's an economist on the issue behind the issue, that of urban planning:

"Walkable

Some people are curious about what advantages density could possibly have. Higher density puts you in closer proximity to stuff and means that more stuff can be economically supported... Combine a walkable neighborhood with a decent transit system - which itself can be more supportable with higher population density - and you reduce the need for one car per driving age household member as well as removing the primary parental job description of "chauffeur." These things are self-reinforcing. ...

But the density needs to be combined with other things for it to work. You need mixed-use zoning in some areas at least so people are mixed in with retail/jobs. You need calmer traffic areas so that being a pedestrian isn't a health hazard. You need a sensible, if not perfect, mass transit system."

My neighborhood in the edge of Los Feliz is walkable, and I love to walk it now that people aren't shooting each other.

Obama '08 -- *The 'Give 'em Enough Rope' tour.*

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Saturday, November 03, 2007

Anything goes

It's official. Obesity is caused by too many calories. Here is the [NBER study](#). It's not urban sprawl of global warming.

But dumb ideas do not go away easily. This morning's [LA Times](#) includes the latest installment of the "subway to the sea" discussion about extending the Red Line west to the beach (but not yet beyond). The existing Red Line is about 16-miles of guideway that cost \$4.7 billion to build, serves just 115,000 riders per day and costs \$78 million a year to operate (the last time I looked). I have reported many times that this amounts to a \$323 million/year loss -- which shrinks to \$286 million/year if the most optimistic non-rider benefit assumptions (reduced auto use) are added.

These details are never addressed in the discussion of whether to spend another \$6 billion on the 6-7 mile extension. The Times' coverage does mention that current daily bus boardings along the route are 64,300 (or 34,900, depending on the alignment chosen). It also mentions that costs on the currently-under-construction "Expo" light-rail line are running 23% above budget.

When pork meets green, anything goes.

posted by Peter Gordon @ 11/03/2007 09:48:00 AM



[Home](#)

Possible New Route For L.A.'s 'Subway To The Sea'

[California](#) | [Land Use](#) | [Transportation](#)Posted by: [Nate Berg](#)

5 November 2007 - 2:00pm

Building a "Subway to the Sea" in Los Angeles has been on the table for years, with local residents staunchly opposed to the rail line extension that would tunnel underneath their upscale neighborhoods. But now a new route is being proposed.

"After trying for three decades to build a subway down Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles County transit officials are now considering a radically different route that would send the Westside rail line through Hollywood, West Hollywood and the Beverly Center area."

"The new proposed alignment for the 'Subway to the Sea' would extend west from the Hollywood/Highland Red Line station, roughly following Santa Monica Boulevard through Beverly Hills, a route that backers say should dip south to connect with the Beverly Center mall and Cedars-Sinai Medical Center."

"The new concept is still in its preliminary stages, and the Wilshire alignment remains on the table. But even though officials don't have funding for the \$6-billion project, the new concept has sparked much debate because of how crucial many officials see the subway to easing the Westside's traffic woes."

"The new route would bypass the Miracle Mile and Hancock Park, where opposition remains strong to a subway from residents in the upscale residential district."

Source: *Los Angeles Times*, Nov 05, 2007Full Story: [L.A. subway plans take a radical shift](#)

Social Upheaval

Political commentary from a feminist activist perspective. I'm a national board member of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and work in direct marketing.

« [We'll Be Paying for Empire Expansion Till the End of Time](#) | [Main](#)

November 3, 2007

The Sorry State of Public Trans in the US

My favorite city to live in (Chicago), is having trouble paying for its old, rickety public trans system (which by the way is the 2nd largest system in the country). Alas, those down state and suburban fools in the state legislature refuse to budget for the needs of the majority of the state's population (aka Chicagoland residents). Instead of expanding and enhancing the system, the MTA probably has to cut services and postpone upgrades.

In related crazy-people-control-politics news, the LA MTA has a new plan for the subway to the sea. Instead of acknowledging Wilshire as the overwhelmingly most popular bus route in the city, there's a proposal to route it on Santa Monica where more young people live who would embrace faux city living. Apparently, the masses of poor people who desperately need better public trans in this city are secondary to the desire by city boosters to create yuppie paradise.

["Chicago's transit budget at a crossroads: Emergency funds are granted as state lawmakers debate a sales-tax increase."](#) in today's LAT

["L.A. subway plans take a radical shift,"](#) by Rong Gong Lin II in today's LAT

Posted by cj at November 3, 2007 8:14 PM

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MONDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2007

[Reading the Newspapers So You Don't Have To \(Weekend Edition\)](#)

News

LA Times Discusses Alternate Route for Subway to the Sea

<http://www.latimes.com/news/printedition/california/la-me-rail3nc>

Port of Long Beach to Follow LA's Lead to Ban Dirty Trucks

http://www.cunninghamreport.com/news_item.php?id=102

Mayors blame Feds for anti-green policies

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/politics/la-na-mayors4r>

Conservative Writer Says All Government Planning is Bad

<http://frontpagemagazine.com/Articles/Read.aspx?GUID=2C329C1>

County Supervisors Call for More Rail Freight

http://www.pasadenastarnews.com/opinions/ci_7363522

Press Telegram: Don't Under-fund freight network

http://www.presstelegram.com/opinions/ci_7363421

Trucks Can't Follow the Rules in Sacramento

<http://www.sacbee.com/101/story/472022.html>

Gold Line Extension on Schedule

http://www.whittierdailynews.com/news/ci_7372160

New Overcrossing In Fontana

<http://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/articles/2007/11/03/news/02r>

Coming Soon, I-710 Traffic Study/EIS

http://www.cunninghamreport.com/news_item.php?id=098

Posted by DAYMEN at [6:49 AM](#)

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transportation planners @ ucla

saturday, november 3, 2007

Sirinya's adventures with public transit: Changes w/subway to the sea

Today's Los Angeles Times reports that some LA County transit officials are supposedly proposing to shift the supposed Subway to the Sea route up to Santa Monica Boulevard instead of running along Wilshire. (See [here](#) for the article.)

Earlier last month, several transportation planning students (including Matt H., Matt P., Katie C., and Rebecca C.) and I attended a public hearing for the Westside Transit Study at a middle school here in Westwood. There, we listened to community association leaders basically say that they wanted all of the proposed options and they wanted them yesterday. Now if only the cute jolly grandfather who was the president of the Bel-Air Homeowners Association could knock some sense into the guy who is president of the Windsor Square Homeowners Association.

I guess I don't *get it* when I listen to these NIMBY types who talk about fears of increased crime around subway stations. For starters, do they look at any of the crime statistics around our existing stations? Do they think that the hoodlums from the "hood" are going to get off specifically in Windsor Square in order to mug them? I mean, in DC, the subway stations were a *safe place* because they were manned by people all of the time.

People can be so *short sighted* sometimes.

posted by sirinya at [11:15 am](#)

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welcome to transportation planners @ ucla

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[Sirinya's adventures with public transit: Changes ...](#)

[Flexcar and Zipcar to merge; DC scratches zones](#)

► [October \(3\)](#)

contributors

[Topster](#)

[Sirinya](#)

[Matt Holte](#)

[Becca](#)

[Maya](#)

[Stephen](#)

[Stanislav](#)

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2007

More Westside transit meetings



Hope you saw S M Distress Monitor's [Traffic Jam](#) on Oct. 15. Here are three Westside transit meetings you could attend, from [Friends 4 Expo](#):

Tonight, is the City of **Santa Monica Industrial Lands workshop**, including the Bergamot Station and Mid-City **Expo Line station** locations, part of its Land Use and Circulation Element update. It will be at 6:30 (6:00 registration), Lincoln Middle School cafeteria, 1501 California Ave. See the City's website for [details and RSVP](#).

Or see how many Cheviot Hills homeowners get heated at the [Expo Line Phase 2 Initial Screening Results](#) third meeting, also 6:30 tonight, at Vista Del Mar Child and Family Services Gymnasium, 3200 Motor Ave., LA.

And Metro added a sixth Westside Extension (aka Wilshire "**Subway to the Sea**") [Alternatives Analysis](#) public meeting in West Hollywood, Mon., Oct. 29, 6:00 p.m., Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd.

Posted by Westside Bubble at [8:50 AM](#)

12 comments:

Anonymous said...

I was born and raised in Mar Vista and lived in Palms for 10/20/2007 1:51 PM

MONDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2007

October Westside transit meetings



For those of us who care about **Westside traffic** as well as housing, this October is a big month for public transit meetings (from [Curbed LA](#) / [LA Visions](#)). The first subway meeting is **tomorrow**.

1. **Metro Westside Extension** (aka Wilshire "**Subway to the Sea**") Alternatives Analysis public meetings. "*Please join Metro at one of five upcoming community meetings where you can comment on what you want Metro to study.*" All meetings are 6:00-8:00 p.m. (same content at each). [More info](#).

Westwood/Century City - Tues., Oct. 9 - Emerson Middle School, 1650 Selby Ave., LA

Hollywood/West Hollywood - Thurs., Oct. 11 - Pan Pacific Recreation Center, 7600 Beverly Blvd., LA

Mid-Wilshire/Koreatown - Tues., Oct. 16 - LA Wilshire United Methodist Church, 4350 Wilshire Blvd., LA

Beverly Hills - Wed., Oct. 17 - Beverly Hills Public Library Auditorium, 444 North Rexford Dr., BH

Santa Monica - Thurs., Oct. 18 - Santa Monica Public Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd., SM

2. **Expo Line Phase 2** Initial Screening Results. All meetings are 6:30-8:30 p.m. [Announcement flier](#) (1.5 M PDF); [Expo Construction Authority](#); [Friends 4 Expo Transit](#).



Roads facing funding gridlock

Problems plague transit system

By Kerry Cavanaugh and Harrison Sheppard, Staff Writers

The region's transportation system is so clogged that Southern California residents and businesses will have to pay up if they want swifter freeways and efficient transit systems, according to a regional plan released Thursday.

Funding falls far short of the estimated \$545.3 billion needed to upgrade and expand the transportation system throughout the six-county Southern California area.

And with \$132 billion needed to fill the gap, the region should pursue pay-to-use programs including toll roads, benefit-assessment districts and cargo container fees, according to the plan by the Southern California Association of Governments.

"It's time to recognize the infrastructure problems that we're facing," said Alan Wapner, an Ontario City Council member who helped oversee the plan. "We've never really placed a value on private transportation."

The 30-year transportation plan outlines all projects eligible for funding and explains how to

pay for them.

Some Los Angeles leaders said the region has no choice but to explore new ways to raise money for transportation projects - and they think voters can be convinced.

"People understand that we need to do more, and that years of neglect and years of lack of vision have put us in the situation where we are really behind the eight ball in having a public transportation system that works," said Los Angeles Councilwoman Wendy Greuel, who heads the council's transportation committee.

"People are willing to look at things they never looked at before."

Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, who has championed the westward extension of the Purple Line - or the "Subway to the Sea" - has his office analyzing funding strategies for that project and other major mass transit expansions in the city.

"All options are on the table to fund that investment," spokesman Matt Szabo said.

SCAG Executive Director Mark Pisano said most of the proposed innovative financing schemes have been used before - Orange County has toll roads, and railroads pay user fees along the Alameda Corridor.

"We are suggesting we learn from the lessons of the past and move them forward," Pisano said. "The reason we haven't moved forward is

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the state has been unwilling to give us the authority to do more of these types of projects."

Yet many of the concepts are politically unpopular. Critics deride toll roads as "Lexus Lanes" that get the wealthy out of traffic.

And some lawmakers and state employee unions are wary of government partnering with private firms to develop roads or transit lines.

"We are hopeful the public realizes the importance of raising the dollars," said Gary Ovitt, a San Bernardino County supervisor and president of SCAG.

"We see that the state is continually taking (transportation) dollars and putting them in other parts of the budget to balance it. Therefore it's important that we try the tolling and some of these other efforts in hopes that this is the right time."

While existing local, state and federal dollars make up \$413 billion - the bulk of money needed for the 30-year transportation blueprint - the plan suggests 12 options that could generate \$132 billion to fill the gap.

Those include:

Raising the state and federal gas tax by 20 cents per gallon, which would generate \$17 million.

Benefit-assessment districts along the planned extensions of the Gold and Purple lines in which businesses and developers pay a tax for the

"benefit" of sitting alongside them. Such districts could generate \$3.7 billion.

The first phase of the Red Line from Union Station to MacArthur Park levied a tax on nearby businesses that will have generated \$130 million when it expires in 2009. But efforts to tax businesses during later phases of the Red Line through Hollywood were shot down.

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority CEO Roger Snoble said his agency will consider benefit-assessment districts and any other funding mechanism to pay for subway and light-rail expansions.

"The fact is we need to generate a new source of revenue if we are to have a prayer of keeping up with the problems of this region," Snoble said.

Highway tolls on new projects, such as a proposed tunnel under South Pasadena connecting Interstate 710 to Interstate 210. Tolls could generate \$26 billion.

Public/private partnerships in which a private company would finance and build roads or a transportation line under a lease agreement, which could generate \$8.4 billion.

For example, a private firm has proposed building a Maglev-like train that could carry freight from LAX and the harbor to Ontario.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and some Republican lawmakers have been pushing for more public/private partnerships on

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infrastructure projects, but some state employee unions and Democratic lawmakers have resisted amid labor-related concerns.

Schwarzenegger said he plans to introduce more proposals for partnerships in his 2008 State of the State address next month.

"To keep our economy moving, we have to do everything that we can in order to create the infrastructure faster, cheaper and better, and I think that we can do that with the public/private partnership," Schwarzenegger said during a speech in Los Angeles last week.

"It's just that right now it is such a new concept for our legislators that they're not there yet 100 percent."

Last year, Democratic leaders authored a bill that would allow four new public/private partnerships, two in Southern California and two in Northern California.

"The speaker believes they're worth looking into, but they're not a panacea," said Steve Maviglio, spokesman for Assembly Speaker Fabian Nu ez, D-Los Angeles, who proposed the pilot project legislation.

But some Republicans and private companies are concerned the bill requires legislative approval for individual projects - meaning they could be re-negotiated with more provisions that dilute some of the economic benefits or change the original terms of the bid.

State Sen. George Runner, R-Lancaster, who is carrying legislation to expand the use of such partnerships, said he hopes to convince the unions that public/private partnerships will not mean layoffs for state employees.

"We see these as job opportunities," Runner said. "These are going to be projects that just won't happen unless we have that private investment there backed up by some kind of a toll or some kind of a user fee that then helps provide the payback for the investor."

The 2008 Regional Transportation Plan is now under review, and SCAG will approve the final draft next year.

Staff Writer Rick Orlov contributed to this story.

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From the Los Angeles Times

Seeing the light on the subway

If L.A. is going to have a mature transit system, turnstiles are the way to go.
By Matthew DeBord

December 11, 2007

By the standards of most big cities, Los Angeles has a frisky, young public transit system. But in recent years -- as the city's population has increased and, more important, the region's traffic problems have evolved into a full-on civic tragedy -- it's become obvious that public transportation in L.A. needs to grow up fast.

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority has responded to the challenge with energy and vision. The agency's 2001 long-range plan is unflinching in its analysis of population trends and projected budget shortfalls. By 2025, there will be more than 13 million people living, working and -- depending on gas prices -- driving in L.A. County. The MTA estimates that it will have a little over \$11 billion to improve the transit system, and some profound incentives to do so. Baseline freeway speeds are expected to drop below 20 mph for a vast swath of the current network; we're looking at universal gridlock. If we don't ramp up a highly integrated public transit grid, blending subways, buses and light rail, L.A. may face an economic crisis brought on by our inability to get around.

That is why it's crucial that the MTA's plan to install 275 turnstiles in subway stations and some light rail stops, at an estimated cost of \$30 million, not be greeted with laments for the honor-system policy that has been in place for 15 years.

The MTA estimates that it's losing \$5.5 million in annual revenue to scofflaw ridership. About 5% of riders don't pay the \$1.25 per trip. They don't even need to be especially innovative about their transgressions. They can simply meander into a Metro station and slip into a train, taking their chances that they won't be asked to produce a ticket by one of the few dozen fare inspectors or sheriff's deputies riding the rails. Most fare-beaters seem to have done their own risk-benefit analysis, determining that the crime is worth the possible fine, a mere \$250.

When I first moved to downtown L.A. from New York and took the Metro out for a spin, I was stunned to discover how easy it was to ride gratis. "Honey, you can't believe it," I said to my wife, a nearly lifelong New Yorker. "The subway here is free!" She scowled. Now I'm scowling too.

The MTA needs to stamp out this lazy insurrection, and the proposed turnstiles will be an effective, low-impact way to do it. As an added benefit, turnstiles will make it easier for the MTA to implement a zoned fare system, similar to that of Washington's Metrorail, which charges riders a fare based on how far they've traveled. Jane Matsumoto, an MTA executive working on implementing the gate plan, says "smart" turnstiles will even enable riders to pay with credit cards.

Public transportation in Los Angeles is at a crucial juncture: The population has finally recognized that it's in everyone's interest to dial back our collective obsession with cars. Important transit improvements, notably the controversial "subway to the sea," are no longer chuckled about at cocktail parties -- they're eagerly anticipated by Angelenos of every ethnicity and social class. We are at the very definition of a tipping point, the moment when we graduate to Metro 2.0.

If the MTA balks on defending the system now, it will do worse than sacrifice a few million in urgently needed

revenue -- it will blow its opportunity to make our public transportation system a point of urban pride. "Most people who use the system want to pay," Matsumoto said. "Most people are honest."

All the world's great mass transit networks, from the New York City subway to the Paris Metro to the London Underground, are beloved by their riders, commemorated in film and celebrated in song. In New York, where access to the system is tightly protected, turnstile-jumping is viewed as an acceptable youthful transgression -- something that everyone might try once -- but is despised as a regular practice. New Yorkers understand that the subway is a vast, complicated organism, almost a living, breathing entity, and that it requires a steady inflow of money to remain healthy. By its actions, the MTA needs to encourage us not just to use our public transportation system; it needs to insist that we cherish it.

In the overall scheme of L.A. County's large-scale transportation goals, the installation of the turnstiles is a relatively minor component. The reason it has attracted so much attention and a measure of outcry is that Angelenos are in the awkward position of not really knowing what our transportation grid will look like in the future. What we do know is that our freeway-centric system is breaking down.

Anxiety is in the air. But in a city synonymous with the automobile, the adaptation to subways has gone unexpectedly well: Metro trips are at 1.5 million a day and rising.

Some of this can be chalked up to the loose organization of the public rail network itself: The honor system has made the subway inviting. But the time has come to put away those childish ways and allow our Metro to become what it needs to be: a mature partner in our transportation destiny.

Matthew DeBord is a writer in Los Angeles.

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