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April 24, 2020

The Honorable James T. Butts, Chairman
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Chairman Butts:

The South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) has been participating in Metro's NextGen Transit Study over the past 18 months. We have reviewed the significant changes in Metro's bus service being considered in the South Bay. We also appreciate Metro staff's effort to date in coordinating any Metro service changes with South Bay municipal operators so they can determine if their agencies can mitigate South Bay service reductions by replacing Metro service with municipal service.

The SBCCOG understands that the current Covid 19 pandemic has required Metro to cancel its planned NextGen Study public outreach and public hearing process. In addition, Covid-19 recovery has significantly changed Metro's operating environment, perhaps permanently, and raised the urgency of immediately considering implementing recommendations that were developed in the NextGen study as Metro designs its post-Covid-19 service recovery plans.

In that context, the SBCCOG has reviewed the potential NextGen service changes and encourages Metro to establish an implementation program framework that:

1. Enables Metro to consider implementing some of the NextGen Study recommended service changes in its Covid-19 service recovery plan understanding that Metro can implement service changes totaling less than 25% of Metro service on each line without a formal outreach or public hearing process.
2. Requires coordination prior to cancelling any Metro line within the South Bay with South Bay municipal transit operators to find alternatives that avoid eliminating or degrading current South Bay transit service and to seamlessly transition any lines or line segments that can be continued by a non-Metro operator;
3. Funds non-traditional and emerging mobility options in Metro's budget to support Metro and South Bay jurisdictions' ability to replace cancelled lines with micro-transit on the South Bay Local Travel Network into Metro's service change planning; (e.g.: administration and marketing of ride hailing apps, first/last-mile and sub-regional micro-transit, carshare and bike/scooter share options);
4. Supports Covid-19 recovery initiatives to encourage ongoing and new Work From Home and Virtual Government Services strategies as a means to reduce arterial congestion and improve transit speed and reliability;

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5. Coordinates with affected local jurisdictions on any local planning, design and construction commitments that would be needed to implement the 6 potential South Bay High Quality Bus Corridors that would be within their jurisdiction and to expedite corridor development funding;
6. Does not implement a service change that imposes a new transfer if the transfer time increases South Bay rider travel times more than increased service frequency reduces total travel time including new transfers; and
7. Does not implement any Metro service changes that would eliminate Access Services availability in pockets of the South Bay where Metro service is eliminated.

SBCCOG believes implementing Metro service changes within this framework will provide a more efficient and effective Metro regional bus network while maintaining sub-regional mobility options for the South Bay's transit riders.

Thank you for considering this request.

With gratitude,

Christian Horvath, Chair
South Bay Cities Council of Governments

c.c.: LA Metro Board of Directors
SBCCOG Board of Directors
Phillip A. Washington, LA Metro CEO
Jacki Bacharach, SBCCOG Executive Director