

# South Bay Cities Council of Governments

October 25, 2018

TO: SBCCOG Board of Directors  
FROM: Steve Lantz, SBCCOG Transportation Director  
RE: SBCCOG Transportation Update –October 2018

## **Adherence to Strategic Plan:**

*Goal A: Environment, Transportation and Economic Development.* Facilitate, implement and/or educate members and others about environmental, transportation and economic development programs that benefit the South Bay.

## **FEDERAL**

### **FTA Approves LONP For Metro’s Purple Line Subway To Westwood**

To allow Metro to proceed with engineering of the Purple Line Segment Three (between Century City and the Westwood/VA Hospital), the Federal Transit Administration approved Metro’s request for a “Letter of No Prejudice” (LONP) in mid-September. The LONP permits the agency to incur costs on a project using non-federal resources with the understanding that the federal share of costs incurred after the letter’s approval may be reimbursable to Metro if the project is chosen for federal funding later.

The LONP was executed in the context of the Trump Administration’s continuing opposition to new federal transit grants. The letters don’t affect the federal agency’s balance sheets since local and private money can be spent — with the risk that federal money may not come. The LONP provides Metro a measure of confidence that federal funds will be forthcoming for the project. Without the LONP, none of Metro’s expenses incurred before a full funding contract is executed between FTA and Metro would be reimbursable.

Metro requested the LONP in October 2017. The Administration has been slow-walking required approvals for projects that Congress has approved with mandatory expenditure deadlines. Prior to executing the Metro LONP, the FTA had executed only two full funding grant agreements this year (with 50 more in its pipeline, both for Small Start projects) despite a legislative mandate in the fiscal 2018 omnibus spending legislation (Public Law 115-141) that directs the FTA to spend 85% of its capital investment grants by the end of calendar 2019. Transportation spending bills for fiscal 2019 (H.R. 6147) include similar deadlines for spending by the end of calendar 2020.

Metro’s Long Range Transportation Plan has assumed that the federal share of Segment Three will be \$1.3 billion. The FTA approved the LONP last month in part because Metro reduced its initial increment of the federal funding request from \$786 million to \$492 million based on the favorable tunnel bids and other “project efficiencies”. The approval enables Metro to avoid up to

2 years in delays and escalation costs of rebidding the initial tunneling bids which came in \$130 million lower than anticipated and were due to expire later this month.

Metro expects the FTA's New Starts Program grant agreement will be forthcoming in early 2019. The reduction in anticipated federal funds also will need to be incorporated into the 2019 update of Metro's Long Range Transportation Plan. Section Three of Metro's Purple Line is expected to open by 2026, in time for the 2028 L.A. Olympic and Paralympic Games in Los Angeles.

### **Draft AASHTO Design Guide Includes Protected Bike Lanes, Other Bike Design Options**

A draft of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) Bike Guide circulated in mid-September for the first time includes protected bike lanes, protected intersections, sidewalk level bike lanes, contra-flow bike lanes, and parking protected bike lanes. The new guide still needs review by various AASHTO committees, which are helmed by officials from state departments of transportation, but the final version is due out next year.

Although the new treatments are included in the AASHTO guide, they are still considered "experimental" in the Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The MUTCD provides mandatory national engineering standards for federal, state and local road surface markings, traffic signs and signals. As a result, AASHTO's guide encourages planners to seek special permission from the Federal Highway Administration before installing treatments that are considered "experimental" in the MUTCD.

### **STATE**

#### **220,000 EV Drivers in California to Lose Carpool Lane Perk in 2019**

On Jan. 1, 2019 the owners of as many as 220,000 low- and zero-emission vehicles will lose the white and green clean-air decals that allow them to drive solo in the carpool lanes.

As of New Year's Day, drivers who received white and green clean-air stickers before 2017 will have to buy new vehicles to qualify for the program, or purchase used cars that have never had a decal but would have qualified for one in 2017 or 2018. Drivers issued white or green decals in 2017 or 2018 can apply for a red sticker that will expire on Jan. 1, 2022.

The new restrictions are being imposed to meet federal requirements that carpool lanes must move at an average of 45 mph during peak commute hours. In 2016, California's highways met that benchmark only 32% of the time.

Clean-air advocates say that the new policy unfairly punishes early adopters of electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids, and will discourage drivers who can't afford to buy a newer zero-emission vehicle — but may have purchased a used one to secure the carpool benefit — from entering the electric vehicle market. The advocates blame the carpool lane congestion problem on cheaters and lax enforcement. They would prefer that congestion in the carpool lanes be addressed by increasing the vehicle occupancy requirement from 2 to 3 occupants rather than limiting or charging zero emission vehicles to use the carpool lanes or ExpressLanes. In L. A. County only the El Monte Busway has a 3+ requirement in peak periods.

Further complicating matters are the new income thresholds placed on sticker-holders with fuel-cell vehicles. Single filers who make more than \$150,000 a year and households that earn more than \$300,000 that purchase a fuel cell vehicle must choose between a clean vehicle rebate and the decal. This choice does not apply to plug-in or battery-run cars because higher-income consumers are ineligible for the rebates so they remain eligible for a decal.

In L.A. County, some environmentally minded commuters will be doubly hit. In April, L.A. Metro opted to end a program granting solo drivers of zero-emission vehicles free access to the carpool lanes on the 110 and 10 freeways. Drivers with clean-air stickers will be charged a toll starting in November or December of this year, though they will receive a 15% discount on the per-mile toll lane price.

### **Brown Signs E-Scooter Bill**

On September 19<sup>th</sup>, Governor Brown signed A.B. 2989 that allows adult e-scooter riders to not wear a helmet beginning in January 2019. Youth under eighteen are still required to wear a helmet, though, the same as with riding bikes.

The bill also would authorize cities to allow scooters on streets that have a speed limit of 35 mph (scooters currently can be operated only on streets where the speed limit is 25 mph or less). Scooters would continue to have a speed limit of 15 mph. The new law leaves in place existing prohibitions such as operating e-scooters without a driver's license and riding them on sidewalks.

### **Brown Signs Transit-Area Tax Increment Financing Bill**

Governor Brown signed SB 961 on September 19<sup>th</sup> that allows cities to adopt Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) to capture tax increment monies and apply such funds towards affordable housing and transportation infrastructure. The bill requires 40% of the tax increment to be used for affordable housing and 10% for urban greening and active transportation. The remaining 50% of the incremental tax funds can be used for transit capital projects including stations and programs supporting transit ridership.

Although SB 961 allows bonding against the tax increment in Neighborhood Infill Finance and Transit Improvements Act (NIFTI-2) districts without voter approval, the law creates a community petition process that can trigger such a public vote.

### **Governor Signs Several Bills To Boost EV Market**

Governor Brown signed a package of bills to boost the electric vehicle market on Sept. 13<sup>th</sup>. Among the environmental measures he signed were:

- Senate Bill 1014 gives state regulators authority to establish emissions reduction targets for ride-hailing services like Uber and Lyft. The bill originally would have required the companies to provide all of their rides in zero-emission vehicles by 2029, but it was scaled back amid opposition from the tech industry.
- Assembly Bill 2885 directs the state to prioritize low-income applicants for electric vehicle rebates.

- Senate Bill 957 allows low-income Californians to obtain carpool lane stickers for clean cars bought secondhand.
- Assembly Bill 193 provides rebates for replacement batteries and fuel cells in used vehicles.

## **REGION**

### **Metro Board Asks for Funding Plan for Aspirational 'Twenty-Eight by `28' Initiative**

The Metro Board of Directors adopted a motion on September 28<sup>th</sup> reaffirming the agency's commitment to the “Twenty-Eight by `28 Initiative,” a plan to finish 28 transit projects before Los Angeles hosts the 2028 Olympics. The board directed Metro staff to report back with a financial plan for the “Twenty-Eight by `28” initiative by February 2019.

The Metro Board first endorsed the initiative last January. At the time, the 28 projects were deemed to be “aspirational” because most would be subject to future environmental, design, right of way, and accelerated funding commitments to be constructed by 2028.

### **LA City Plans To Cut Smog 25 Percent By The 2028 Olympics**

The city of Los Angeles is working on a new 2028 Zero Emissions Road Map. The plan to accelerate the electrification of transportation by the 2028 Olympics in partnership with Tesla, BMW, Edison and other industry and academic institutions being convened by the Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator.

The city wants to have a more detailed plan by mid-2019 to flesh out the steps identified in their plan. Step No. 1 is to have 45 percent of private cars be electric within 10 years by making electric cars affordable, safe and easy to buy. It's a very ambitious goal since only about 1% of California vehicles are currently electric. It includes installing approximately 120,000 charging stations. Step 2 is to almost completely electrify public transportation and implement small vehicles like electric scooters in places where walking doesn't make sense. Step 3 is to convert up to a quarter of semi-trucks and up to half of medium delivery trucks to be electrically propelled in the next decade.

Read the plan at: <http://roadmap.laci.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/LACI-Roadmap-091718vT8j2.pdf>

### **Construction On Metro's Crenshaw/LAX Line Is Months Behind Schedule**

At a September 20<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Metro Board's Construction Committee, Metro staff said that Walsh/Shea Corridor Constructors, the firm tasked with building the 8.5-mile Crenshaw/LAX light rail line, is five months behind schedule on the project. Staff said it was working with the contractor to recover the schedule, but declined to provide a finite opening date. Work on the Crenshaw/LAX Line is 86 percent complete, but electrical work on the northern part of the line is proving to be much more time consuming than anticipated.

### **Green Line Pay Parking Signs Removed At Marine And Douglas Green Line Stations**

Paid parking began in June at four Green Line Stations: Aviation/LAX, Crenshaw, Lakewood, and Norwalk and Metro plans to include the Hawthorne/Lennox station by next June to better manage demand and to dissuade parking by those that are not using the Green Line. However,

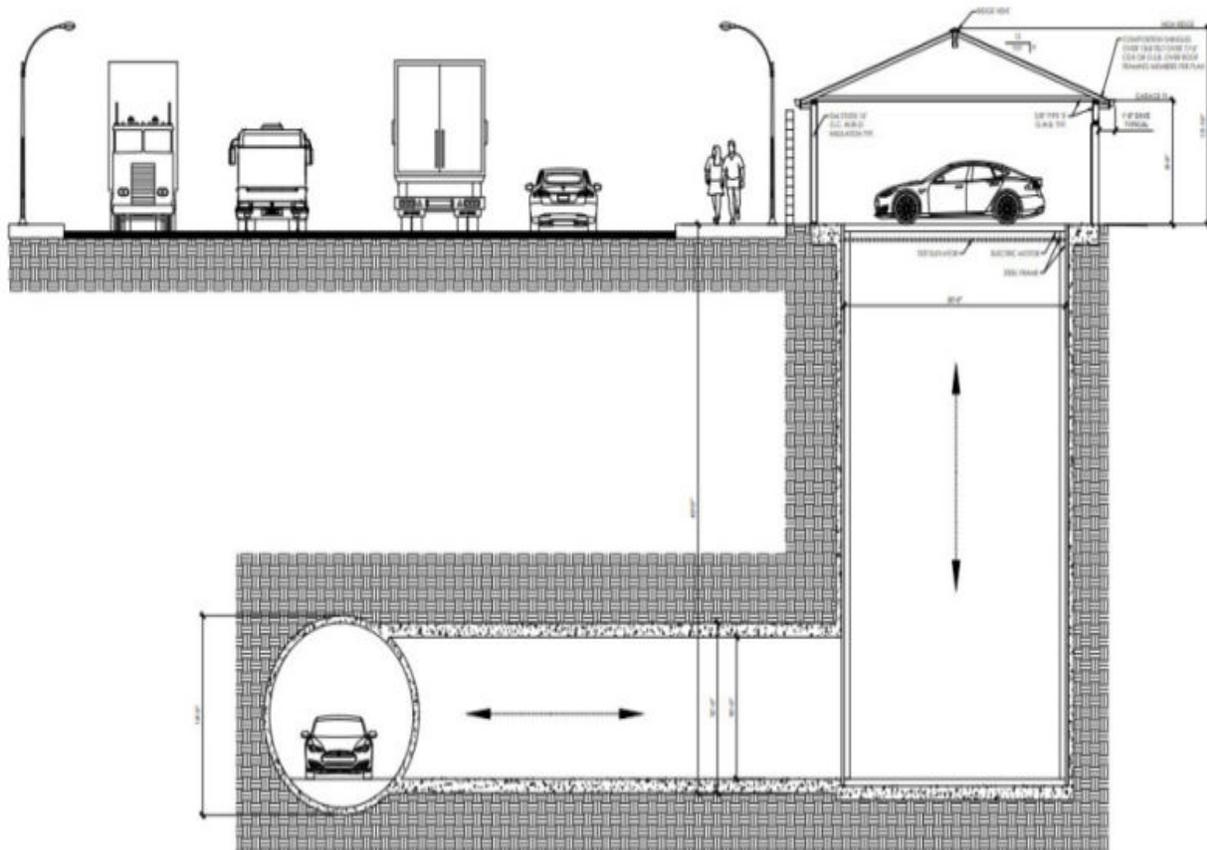
the agency does not intend to charge for parking yet at the Douglas or Marine Stations in El Segundo.

The signs were apparently installed in early August by mistake at these two stations and were removed on August 22<sup>nd</sup>. No money was charged while the signs were up, and the Metro web app didn't accept attempts to pay for parking.

### **Hawthorne Allows Boring Company To Build A Futuristic Tunnel Garage**

The Boring Company has purchased a property near SpaceX headquarters in Hawthorne where it plans to build a private, prototype garage. Hawthorne City Council has granted the company permission to build a shaft on the property. The company was granted council approval on the basis that the prototype won't be open to the public, nor affect traffic flow from the street and it still needs to provide more detailed plans to the city before it can start building.

The structure would include an elevator which would lower a vehicle underground before connecting it to a commuter tunnel, without it ever having to use public streets. The car would be transported through the lower tunnel on electric skates, so ventilation wouldn't be a problem.



## **TRENDS**

### **More Americans Now Telecommute Than Take Public Transportation to Work**

The latest estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau published in mid-September show that approximately 8 million workers primarily work from home. That makes telework now second behind only driving as the most common means of getting to work, exceeding public transportation for the first time. Last year, an estimated 5.2% of workers in the American Community Survey reported that they usually telecommute. Meanwhile, the share of employees taking public transportation declined slightly to 5%.

The number of Americans that telecommute at least occasionally is much larger than what's depicted in the federal data. That's because the Census survey asks respondents to report how they "usually" go to work, meaning those working from home only a day or two each week aren't counted. A 2016 Gallup survey found that 43 percent of employees spent at least some time working remotely.

According to the latest estimates, 4.3 percent of all private wage and salary workers usually worked from home last year, up from 2.7 percent a decade prior. Although self-employed individuals are the mostly likely to work from their homes, with about 24 percent doing so last year, the self-employed make up a small share (5.9 percent) of the overall workforce.

Additionally, older workers are significantly more likely to telework than younger age groups. The Census estimates indicate that 7 percent of workers age 60 to 64 worked from home, as well as 10.3 percent of those age 65 and over.

### **Cities Can Now Buy Electric Cars Together in Bulk**

The Climate Mayors organization on September 12<sup>th</sup> unveiled a new procurement platform that will help lower the cost of electric vehicles by enabling cities to collectively purchase them through an online portal known as the Climate Mayors Electric Vehicle Purchasing Collaborative.

The Climate Mayors is a national coalition of more than 400 U.S. mayors dedicated to pursuing environmental initiatives, and 19 founding Climate Mayors' cities and two counties have already committed to purchasing 376 EVs as a result of the new online portal.

Learn more at: <https://driveevfleets.org/> .

### **Outside The Box Truck: Public Delivery Lockers Could Change Our Cities**

Anne Goodchild, the founding director of the Supply Chain Transportation and Logistics Center at the University of Washington, is researching ideas to improve the way packages are delivered in the internet era - especially in the final 50 feet - the part of the delivery process that happens after the truck is parked, yet before the package is received.

One of the solutions she has evaluated is installing a public locker system in a Seattle building lobby downtown to free the delivery driver and receiver from being in the same place at the same time and measuring how long it took to deliver to it. In the case study, truck dwell time was reduced by 78%. And there were no failed deliveries.

Although Amazon and UPS are pioneering the delivery lockers, the research recommended common carrier lockers for every building over three stories since the locker reduces the number

of stops the driver makes in the building, reduces delivery truck dwell time at the curb, and provides a reliable and secure delivery for package receivers. Goodchild also recommended that local jurisdictions consider contracting to install and operate the lockers to more efficiently manage use of their curb space.

View the article at : <https://depts.washington.edu/sctlctr/news-events/in-the-news/outside-box-truck-innovations-delivery-could-change-our-cities>