

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

July 24, 2014

TO: SBCCOG Board of Directors

FROM: Steve Lantz, SBCCOG Transportation Consultant

RE: SBCCOG Transportation Update – July 2014

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.

FOLLOW THE MONEY...

TRANSIT / HIGHWAY

U.S. DOT Issues Emergency Plan To Ration Federal Transportation Funds

Because Congress has failed to re-authorize the federal Surface Transportation Act, and anticipating that the federal Highway Trust Fund would be depleted in August, 2014, the U.S. Department of Transportation on June 1st announced emergency funding cash flow allocation procedures that would be implemented for the Highway Trust Fund's Highway Account. The fund's balance will dip below \$4 billion by early August, so starting August 1st, DOT will only make payments to states as the gas and diesel taxes come into the fund if Congress doesn't take action to replenish the fund. The account is principally used to reimburse states for outlays on the U. S. Interstate Highway System and for federal contributions to Mass Transit projects and programs.

Under the new procedures, DOT will reallocate available revenue it receives from the federal gas tax to the states in semi-monthly cash payments in proportion to each state's federal apportionment for the fiscal year. The news is slightly less grim for the Mass Transit Account—which is predicted to run dry in October. So far, the allocation plan does not apply to the Mass Transit Account. Congress can take action at any time to avoid the transit cliff and keep payments to the states moving on time.

For every gallon of gasoline sold in America, 18.4 cents is paid into the Highway Trust Fund, which is used to fund the federal portion of highway, bridge and transit projects across the country. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that DOT would require \$8.1 billion to meet its obligations through Dec. 31st. Although a spending solution that moved the deadline to the end of the year would push it past the November midterm elections, the legal authorization to spend from the fund expires Sept. 30th, which would likely bring back the

Congressional favorite short-term solvency tactic of approving interim MAP-21 continuing resolutions.

The Senate Finance Committee on June 26th began discussing a proposal that would temporarily keep the Highway Trust Fund afloat. The committee was originally scheduled to vote on the measure, but the bill vote was postponed until the week of July 7 following the Independence Day Congressional recess.

One-fourth of State's Cap and Trade Revenue Earmarked for Housing and Transit

One-quarter of the \$872 million generated by California's 18-month-old cap-and-trade scheme will be used for housing and public transit programs for poor and minority communities in a deal that was approved on June 16 for the FY 14-15 state budget. Consistent with state law, about \$230 million, or 26 percent, of the \$872 million cap-and-trade money will go toward environmental justice efforts.

The Cap and Trade budget also includes \$75 million to weatherize low-income homes and \$25 million for transit and intercity rail networks in poor communities. A program called Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities run by the state's Strategic Growth Council will get \$130 million to plan and build new housing and add amenities like public transit to existing neighborhoods. About 60 percent of anticipated revenues will go to wetland restoration, energy efficiency upgrades for public buildings and recycling efforts. The remaining \$250 million will provide development funding for the California High Speed Rail Project that will someday link San Francisco through the Central Valley to Los Angeles and Orange County.

The program, which is mandatory for electric utilities and industrial facilities, in 2015 will be extended to include motor vehicle fuel and natural gas manufacturing companies. By 2020, the California Cap and Trade program could funnel some \$8 billion a year into the state's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. Eventually, 350 companies responsible for 600 facilities will play a part in the cap-and-trade market by buying, selling and trading permits. The program is the second-largest carbon trading scheme in the world, behind Europe's Emissions Trading System. The only other cap-and-trade market in the United States is the Northeastern Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), which includes Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont.

TRANSPORTATION INNOVATION: STARTS AND STOPS ...

SOUTH BAY

Century Boulevard To Close At Aviation Boulevard For July 25th – July 28th Weekend

Don't plan to use Century Boulevard to arrive at or leave Los Angeles International Airport during the last weekend of July. A bridge-demolition project will close the intersection Century Boulevard and Aviation Boulevard for 57 hours beginning at 9 p.m. on July 25th to demolish a defunct railroad bridge and clear the site for a new Crenshaw/LAX light rail line station and bridge. Century Boulevard will remain blocked until 6 a.m. July 28th.

With Century Boulevard blocked, motorists heading toward LAX that weekend will be diverted north on La Cienega Boulevard, west on Manchester Avenue, then south on Airport Boulevard,

back to Century. Motorists leaving LAX will take the same detour in reverse. Lanes will also be reduced on Aviation Boulevard during the demolition.

MTA officials also noted that once the bridge is demolished, Century Boulevard will remain reduced by one lane in each direction for the next 16 months, leaving three lanes each way.

Los Angeles City Mayor Nominates New L. A. World Port and LADOT Chiefs

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti has nominated new chief executives of the City's Port and Transportation Departments. The City Council must vote to confirm both nominees. American Presidents Line executive Gene Seroka was selected to be the next executive director of the Port of Los Angeles. Seroka runs commercial operations in the Americas region for APL, a subsidiary of Singapore-based ocean carrier Neptune Orient Lines. He has worked for APL and NOL since 1998. Seroka will run the day-to-day operations of North America's busiest container port and will report to the city's Board of Harbor Commissioners.

The mayor also has nominated a new General Manager to run Los Angeles' Department of Transportation. Seleta Reynolds, who leads three teams as part of the Livable Streets program in the Bay Area. She played a major role in carrying out San Francisco's Vision Zero project, which is seeking to cut traffic fatalities to zero by 2024. She also helped launch a program that has introduced 35 bike rental stations in different parts of the city, with another 15 expected by the end of the year.

The L. A. City Transportation Department manages traffic signals, regulates taxis, issues parking citations and runs a bus system, among other things. Lawmakers are debating how to regulate application-based, ride-sharing services, such as Lyft and Uber. And activists are demanding a reduction in the amount of fines for parking violations. The department is also being pushed to put key streets on "road diets," taking away car lanes and using the additional space for bus-only lanes, wider sidewalks or dedicated bicycle lanes over the objection of some neighborhoods.

Long Beach Harbor Commission Elects New Port CEO

The Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners has selected Jon Slangerup, former head of FedEx Canada, as the port's chief executive. Slangerup succeeds former J. Christopher Lytle, who left the port about a year ago for a similar position at the Port of Oakland.

TRANSIT / RIDESHARING / CARSHARING

How Car Sharing Services Will Comply with ADA Is Still In Development

While many of Uber and Lyft's legal battles have been initiated by the taxi industry, a lawsuit filed by three mobility-impaired plaintiffs from San Antonio and Houston, claims that Uber and Lyft have violated the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) by failing to provide a way for wheelchair users to take advantage of their services. The suit has drawn attention to the wildly varied ways in which peer-to-peer ride-sharing companies have addressed (or failed to address) the needs of customers with disabilities.

The ADA requires vehicles-for-hire to offer "reasonable accommodations" for wheelchair users. Although wheelchair-accessible vehicles are rare both in the traditional taxi system and through

rideshare services, traditional taxi companies are required in many cities to make some of their vehicle fleets wheelchair-accessible. But even the basic concept of “wheelchair accessibility” has several shades of meaning. Most vehicles can accommodate folding wheelchairs and some companies have a limited number of lift- or ramp-equipped vehicles in their networks. But, so far, no transportation network company has a systematic way to ensure that such privately owned vehicles will be available when and where customers with non-folding wheelchairs require them.

HIGHWAY

Mini-Blimps May Soon Monitor Highway Traffic Around the Clock

Next time you're on the highway and see one of those "Speed Monitored by Aircraft" signs, look up - the United States is getting its first, persistently airborne traffic-monitoring blimp. The Ohio Department of Transportation purchased a \$200,000 "Blimp in a Box" from a company called the Drone Aviation Corporation in June. Though the state hasn't specifically explained how it will use the monitoring device, issuing speeding tickets from 1,000 feet in the air and five miles away is certainly feasible. Other potential uses include monitoring agriculture, large gatherings, increasing security at penitentiaries, and monitoring traffic.

DETOURS, TWISTS AND TURNS

SOUTH BAY

After 30-years, A Conceptual Metro Rail / Automated People Mover Approved for LAX

Following 30-years of on-again, off-again negotiations between L. A. Metro and Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA), the conceptual LAX automated people mover (APM) route that will eventually connect to the Crenshaw / LAX and Green Metro Rail Lines was selected by the Metro Board of Directors on June 26th.

The preferred alternative, known as Alternative A2, will be above 96th Street with two stations between the LAX central terminal and Aviation Boulevard. One station will be sited next on 96th Street at Lot C to serve the bus transit center, airport shuttles, and the Lot C long-term parking lot. The other station will be at 96th Street at a new Metro Crenshaw / LAX Aviation Boulevard station that will serve the Crenshaw / LAX light rail project and envisioned LAX Consolidated Rental Car Agency Center. The new station would be less than a half mile north of the previously approved light rail station at Aviation Boulevard and Century Boulevard. Both stations would be built.

A key routing and station siting decision within the LAX central terminal area must also be determined. One alternative would route the people mover down the spine of the terminal with two stops in the “horseshoe”. The other route would split the people mover into a northern and southern branch between the terminal entrances and the parking structures with two stops on each branch within the “horseshoe”. A subway alternative that would have directly routed the Metro Crenshaw / LAX and Green Lines into the Tom Bradley international terminal was eliminated. Although LAWA plans the APM station at Lot C, a re-routed Metro Rail line connection to the APM at Lot C was removed from further consideration.

Metro staff expects to return to the Metro board in July for funding from the LAX Connector Project and authorization to begin the design and site preparation work needed for the Crenshaw/LAX project not to preclude the APM/Metro Rail joint station. The Locally Preferred Automated People Mover Alternative will need to be further evaluated in a LAWA Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The LAWA Board of Airport Commissioners is expected to certify the EIR and select the final automated people mover alignment and profile in December 2014. The APM could open by 2022.

The Metro Board also approved an amendment by Don Knabe that instructs the Metro CEO to work with LAWA and the Board of Airport Commissioners to obtain LAWA's written commitment to construct and operate an automated people mover connecting the airport's central terminal area to a planned Metro Rail Station, and to report back at the July 2014 Metro Planning and Metro Programming and Construction Committees, and at Committees each month hereafter until this written commitment is obtained.

Metro's funding share is capped at approximately \$150 million. Buried in the Metro technical report is the justification for LAWA paying 90% of the more than \$1.5 billion APM project cost. MTA's consultant estimates that in 2035 1,790 passengers will take the train to the airport each day, or 653,000 train-to-LAX passengers per year. If the Southern California Association of Governments projection is accurate that LAX will serve 78.9 million passengers in 2035, LAX trains will carry less than 1% of trips. According to the SCAG study, 57% will continue to take personal vehicles, and another 33% will take taxis, limos or shared ride vans. Most of the rest will use the LAX FlyAway services and public transit buses.

TRANSFORMATIVE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING FOR THE SOUTH BAY

Non-Profit, Public-Private-Partnership Bike Sharing Project Thrives in Minneapolis

The nation's largest bike-share program, the year-old Citi Bike in New York, is struggling with its ability to keep the system's bikes from being stolen or abandoned, and various other logistical and business challenges. In contrast, Nice Rides in Minneapolis, Minnesota has quietly kept growing and may provide an active transportation development model for South Bay sustainable mobility. Some believe that a non-profit owner-operator organizational model with a committed public-public-partnership approach has made the difference in this tale of two cities.

Nice Rides launched in 2010 with 700 bikes and an operating budget of \$420,000. Of the \$3 million capital investment that got the system going, a third came from the private sector, with title sponsor Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota contributing \$1 million. The rest came from the public sector, mostly in the form of a federal grant from the Federal Highway Administration's Non-motorized Transportation Pilot Program.

This season, Nice Rides is fielding more than 1,500 bikes and has an operating budget of \$1 million, 65 percent of which comes from user revenues and the remainder of which comes from sponsorships and grants. The organization has 11 year-round employees, a high-season staff of 30, and an enthusiastic corps of pro-bono marketing and advertising firms.

Nice Rides has aimed from the beginning for an authentically Minnesotan identity rather than linking itself to a national or international bike-share brand. Nice Rides has used the same bikes and stations and management software as New York, Washington, D.C., Chicago, and many other larger cities. However, because of their business model, the recent bankruptcy of PBSC/Bixi freed up Nice Rides to upgrade outdated software and make other positive changes. A regular one-year membership costs \$65. Acknowledging the challenges of the Minnesota winter, Nice Rides also offers a 30-day pass for \$15. Both plans entitle riders up to 60 minutes of free bike use on each trip.

Nice Rides is slowly branching out from its geographic core, which centers on downtown Minneapolis (population about 400,000), and is trying to build ridership in St. Paul, the state capital just a few miles to the east (population about 300,000). Nice Rides is also starting a new program to expand bike-share to smaller towns in Minnesota and piloting an effort to get bikes into the less affluent neighborhoods of the Twin Cities. While installing a full-fledged docking-station-style system might not make sense for the small city of Bemidji, Minnesota (population 16,000), Blue Cross Blue Shield is underwriting a Nice Rides expansion effort into small cities like Bemidji.

Nice Rides thinks about the organization as being more about the goal than the tool. Since the goal is to get people using healthy, active transportation in all parts of their lives, the organization tries to identify those places that are already, or could be transformed into, bike places frequented by summer-hungry Minnesotans, with some key amenities: lodging in town; a walkable downtown; and access to trails that would take people into the attractive surroundings.