

South Bay Cities Council of Governments Transit Operators' Working Group

April 1, 2021
Meeting Notes

Attendees: Joyce Rooney & Diane Amaya (Beach Cities Transit); Dana Pynn (GTrans); Martin Gombert (PVPTA); James Lee & Ryan Plumb (Torrance Transit); Scott Greene (Metro); Steve Lantz & David Leger (SBCCOG)

1) Self-Introductions & Acceptance of the March 4, 2021 Meeting Notes

The virtual meeting was called to order at 3:06 p.m. Meeting notes were accepted as presented.

2) Transit Operator Issues and Concerns Including COVID-19 Impacts

Mr. Lantz opened discussion for the agencies to share pandemic and general issues and concerns.

Ms. Pynn shared that barriers are in the process of being installed, with a return of front-door boarding and fare enforcement in May if conditions continue improving. Service changes will take place on 4/18 with Line 2 returning to normal operations. GTrans is also considering increasing passenger capacity. Ms. Pynn also noted that GTrans staff currently doesn't seem to have a lot of interest in vaccinations, but information has been posted about the vaccine and the City asks staff to report if they have received it. The city is not actively encouraging it though.

Ms. Rooney reported that Beach Cities Transit returned to front-door boarding this week with the re-opening of schools. There have been some schedule adjustments due to the modified school schedules, but there continues to be no fare collection. BCT provided a letter to staff that would allow them to get vaccinated if they chose to.

Ms. Gombert announced that PVPTA will return to running about 50-60% of service at approximately 50% capacity. Separate from COVID-19, PVPTA will be running a shuttle service from RPV City Hall to the nature preserve due to a significant increase in attendance at the reserve. The program is currently a pilot project and will be evaluated at the 3 and 6 month marks.

Mr. Plumb shared that Torrance Transit continues to run a modified schedule but is adding trips as needed. In-house barriers have been created and are currently being installed. Rear-door boarding is still in place and there is no date on when Torrance Transit will be returning to a normal schedule. Mr. Lee added that the City collaborated with local hospitals to facilitate vaccine distribution to city staff. Close to 60% of employees have gotten their shots, but they do not know specifically how many Transit employees are included in those figures.

Mr. Green shared that Metro facilitated vaccine distribution at the Harbor Gateway Transit Center and saw over 1,000 people show up. Due to HIPPA restrictions, Metro is not requiring vaccination of its employees and drivers but is recommending they do. Separate from COVID-19 issues, Mr. Greene noted that he would like to work with GTrans on some bus stop improvements on Redondo Beach Blvd. near Hawthorne Blvd.

3) Measure R SBHP Decennial Transfer Update & Metro Budget Request Update

Mr. Lantz shared that the Measure R Metro Budget Request was approved by the SBCCOG Board and transmitted to Metro staff at the end of February. The transfer may be formally approved by the Metro Board in July. The City of Inglewood wants Metro to include the SBCCOG's recommended list of projects for approval at that same time, but Metro staff may want to develop guidelines related to the newly-created Measure R Transit Subfunds which could further delay funding.

4) Updates on Metro Issues, Initiatives & Studies

- Recovery Task Force Recommendations

Mr. Greene reported that there isn't much new since last month when the Metro Board adopted service recovery milestones, with full service returning by September 2021.

- Metro Fareless System Initiative

Mr. Lantz shared that there are some Metro Board Members who are pushing hard for a fareless initiative,

while others are pushing back and asking tougher questions of staff. A fareless system would cost Metro approximately \$200 million per year in foregone fare revenues which would need to be replaced, and potentially augmented if service must also be increased. Metro's Congestion Pricing proposal is being discussed as a replacement source for the eliminated fare revenue.

Ms. Pynn shared that the municipal operators have some concerns about the proposal and will discuss among themselves a formal set of concerns to present to the SBCCOG Board.

- **Metro Fare Capping Strategy**

Mr. Lantz reported that the Metro Board approved a capping strategy last month, but the implementation date is still to be determined since it will take approximately nine months to develop TAP software.

- **Metro Traffic Reduction Study/ Congestion Pricing Pilot**

This item was briefly discussed as a replacement funding source for foregone fare revenue if a fareless system initiative is adopted by Metro. Mr. Lantz noted there is not much to report regarding the schedule of this proposal.

- **Metro Sepulveda Pass Transit Corridor Project**

Mr. Lantz reported this project proposal would eventually link the Metrolink station in the East San Fernando valley to LAX via the Sepulveda Pass. Phase 1 would provide a rail line between the San Fernando Valley and the Exposition Line. Metro has identified approximately \$5.8 billion in funding for the project. One proposal, for a monorail system down the center of the I-405 freeway would cost approximately \$6.2 billion. The baseline route would not include a stop at UCLA. A subway proposal is also being considered, which would be aerial in the San Fernando Valley and in a tunnel to the Exposition Line. The subway segment would include a stop at UCLA, and would cost approximately \$10 billion. The March Metro Board Agenda item was to select two technical consultant teams, one for the subway technology and the other for the monorail technology. Metro is working on both proposals concurrently, and will "off-ramp" the team of whichever technology does not get selected.

- **Crenshaw/LAX Project / Centinela Grade Separation Project SEP Funding**

Mr. Lantz noted that the SBCCOG has provided conditional approval for use of Measure M SEP funds to help pay for the South Bay's share of the approximately \$90 million in Crenshaw/LAX cost overruns. However, the City of LA has not yet committed. SBCCOG approval was also conditioned upon Metro's commitment to backfilling the Centinela Grade Separation project budget because that was the South Bay's original intended use of the SEP funds.

- **CEO Succession**

Mr. Lantz that Metro CEO Phil Washington decided to not renew his contract which ends in May. Metro is still in the hiring process.

5) **April 2021 Transportation Update:** Item was received and filed.

6) **Three Month Look-Ahead:** Item was received and filed.

7) **Announcements/Adjournment – Next Transit Operators Working Group meeting**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m. to May 6, 2021 at 3 p.m.