

South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Transit Operators' Working Group
August 6th, 2020
Meeting Notes

Attendees: Joyce Rooney (Beach Cities Transit); Dana Pynn (GTrans); James Lee (Torrance Transit); Scott Greene (Metro); Steve Lantz & David Leger (SBCCOG)

1) Self-Introductions & Acceptance of the July 9, 2020 Meeting Notes

The virtual meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. Meeting notes were accepted as presented.

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

Mr. Lantz opened up discussion for the agencies to share issues and concerns in general and pandemic-related.

Ms. Rooney shared that Beach Cities Transit is currently working to secure a second source of driver barriers after the local vendor proved to be unresponsive. Now that schools are not returning to in-person class until further notice, it is likely that bus service will remain at the current level. BCT continues to prepare for in-person class so that once it is safe, they are prepared for the increase in student ridership.

Mr. Lee reported that Torrance Transit is seeing a slight uptick in ridership. Currently, their busses are running at 18-person capacity (15 seated, 3 standing). Torrance Transit staff is working to develop a proprietary acrylic barrier that works similar to a sliding door. If it proves fruitful, Torrance will consider patenting and selling them.

Ms. Pynn shared that GTrans is implementing similar protocol as Torrance Transit and has started installing partitions, using enhanced AC filters, and other safety protocol. They are also seeing a slight uptick in ridership.

Mr. Greene announced that Metro is running a lot of the articulated buses in their fleet because it allows them to maximize ridership while maintaining social distancing and facilitating double door or rear-door boarding. Metro is at about 35% of pre-pandemic ridership levels.

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

Mr. Lantz reported that Metro has notified the Legislature and the one-year countdown has begun. Metro staff must also take the transfer policy before their Oversight Committee before July 2021 to avoid further delay in the amendment to the Measure R Ordinance.

4) NextGen Study Status Update

Mr. Lantz shared that Metro continues to move forward with the NextGen Study. Mr. Greene reported that Metro will be holding public hearings throughout the rest of the month. The hearings will be held virtually and info on how to comment is available on the Metro NextGen webpage.

5) SBCCOG Letter to Metro re: Long-Range Transportation Plan

Mr. Lantz briefly reviewed the letter with the group and touched on some of the SBCCOG's main concerns. The item will be monitored, and any news will be brought back to future meetings.

6) Inglewood Special Event Service Coordination Update

Ms. Pynn noted that there is nothing happening at the moment due to impacts of the pandemic. Special service will be on hold until spectators are allowed into the stadium. Mr. Greene added that Metro is considering bringing a bus into the Transit Center Park and Ride near the stadium.

7) Metro FY 20-21 Budget Summary

Mr. Lantz reported that there will be a presentation on the new Metro budget in September. Metro expects recovery to begin in January 2021. Ms. Rooney noted that she heard from sources outside of Metro that Metro's revenue figures are significantly lower than forecasted by the organization. Mr. Lantz noted that it's hard to say for certain until the numbers are released, but cautioned that Metro tends to look at best-case-scenarios, not worst-case.

Mr. Greene shared that prior to the COVID-19 Stay At Home Orders, Metro operated a 7-million-service-hour/year plan. It's currently 5.2 million and likely that the service hours will be reduced for several years to come as Metro recovers from the pandemic-induced economic situation. Metro is operating 81% of the service to serve less than 55% of prior riders. Metro has the ability to increase service if warranted by prudent fiscal management.

8) August 2020 Transportation Report – Received and Filed

9) Announcements/Adjournment – Next Transit Operators Working Group meeting

Mr. Lee shared that the Torrance Park and Ride facility is back under construction and is expected to be completed around August 2021.

Ms. Rooney added that Redondo Beach is starting construction on their Transit Center in the coming month, with an expected January 2022 opening.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:42 p.m. to September 3, 2020.