

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE GATEWAY CITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
Wednesday, September 1, 2021
4:30 P.M. Meeting**

Gateway Cities Council of Governments
MEETING REMOTE LOCATION: VIA ZOOM

Chair - MTA Director, Whittier Councilmember – Fernando Dutra

Meeting called to order at 4:33 by MTA Director Councilmember Fernando Dutra – City of Whittier. Roll call was taken by self-introduction.

#	Name	City/Agency	Present	Absent
1.	Cinde MacGugan-Cassidy	COG Board President		X
2.	Ali Saleh	COG 1 st Vice President	X	
3.	Marisela Santana	Board of Directors Member Appointed by the President	X	
4.	Emma Shariff	Board of Directors Member Appointed by the President		X
5.	VACANT	Board of Directors Member Appointed by the President		X
6.	Fernando Dutra, Chair	MTA Board of Directors Rep.	X	
7.	Luke Klipp	Office of Sup. Hahn	X	
8.	Martin Reyes	Office of Sup. Solis	X	
9.	Tracy Beidleman	Long Beach Transit		X
10.	Sharon Weissman	Port of Long Beach	X	
11.	Thaddeus McCormack	CM Steering Committee, Chair	X	
12.	Karen Lee (for William Rawlings)	City Manager, City of Artesia	X	
13.	Tyler Bonanno-Curley (for Kevin Jackson)	City of Long Beach	X	
14.	Bill Pagett	Public Works Officer		X
15.	Ed Norris	Public Works Officer	X	
Total =			10	5

OTHERS PRESENT: Nancy Pfeffer, Genny Cisneros, Karen Heit, Joel Arevalos, Sandra Mora, Marisa Perez – GCCOG Staff: Norman Emerson – Emerson & Associates, Andrew Ross, Jamie Hwang, Roya Falahati – LA County, Kim Tachiki-Chin – 40th District Lucille Roybal-Allard, Raphael Sonenshein – Cal State LA, Hahn, Brett Atencio Thomas, Devon Deming, Mark Dierking, Michael Turner, Raffi Hamparian - Metro

There was no general public comment or matters from staff. There was a correction made to the date of the June Transportation Committee meeting and the consent calendar was approved as corrected with Committee Members Norris and Weissman abstaining.

MTA Director Fernando Dutra introduced Devon Deming, Interim Deputy Executive officer for the Metro Fareless System Initiative (FSI).

Ms. Deming gave an overview of the FSI roll-out including the justification for the program. She discussed the definition and eligibility for low income status, which was based on free or subsidized lunch program eligibility and other programs. For community college students she indicated that students with subsidized passes are more likely to graduate.

She indicated that the cost per K-12 student is \$3.00 per year. For one school districts have expressed interest in participating with this program including Los Angeles Unified and its 500,000 students. She listed the Districts that are ready to go and have distributed the TAP cards.

She went over the Districts that are actively pursuing agreements with their Boards, including Los Angeles Unified.

Metro is using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to fund the Metro portion of the program. The other agencies did not want any ARPA funds taken off the top to cover loss revenue. The other operators can use ARPA or other available funding.

Lastly, she discussed the development of a Metro Youth Council to allow for students 14 – 18 give their input on the program. These students could become future transit leaders. The MTA Board requested a funding plan and a way to involve community college students.

Director Dutra requested questions from the committee members. Sharon Weissman asked if there was a unit load students had to maintain to participate in the program. She also asked if Districts could join after the fact.

Ms. Demings pointed out the complex relationships between community college districts and Metro and other transit agencies with their transit pass agreements. Staff was instructed not to undo the existing programs or contracts between agencies and colleges. The Districts will have the opportunity to participate for \$7 per student.

Ms. Demings indicated that there are weekly meetings with the municipal bus service operators (munis) and that MTA is seeking additional funds to reimburse the munis. These are mismatches. Districts that want to participate and munis that don't. Commissioner Weissman asked if four-year colleges were included. Four-year colleges might be a later phase, they are not in the mix right now.

Luke Klipp, Supervisor Hahn's office asked if Long Beach Transit was currently signed up; the answer was that they are not. LBT is not interested as they believe their students do not ride transit. Director Dutra recognized Karen Lee of Artesia who asked if Cerritos College is interested – they are in negotiations for cost sharing. Norwalk Transit is

currently in the program, there will be revenue sharing with the munis on the back end. As a follow-up Ms. Lee asked about ABC Unified, which has chosen not to participate. She asked if ABC Adult School is eligible; they are not, only the continuation school is eligible. Director Dutra asked which schools are involved from Whittier K-12. If a District is involved, all it's schools will be involved.

The plan is to have the roll-out after MTA Board approval. The FSI team will be ready when Board approves the program. The report was received and filed.

Director Dutra next introduced Brett Atencio-Thomas, LA Metro Principal Transportation Planner Countywide Planning to present the Open Streets Grant Program. Mr. Atencio-Thomas began by defining Open Streets; a concept which originated in Bogota Colombia. The concept of the successful events moved north and in 2010 there was the first CicLAvia in Los Angeles. MTA recognized the benefit of CicLAvia and requested that a program be developed. Mr. Atencio-Thomas went over the "Goals for the Open Street Grant Program". They are to: encourage sustainable transportation, develop multi-modal policies, and to provide an opportunity to ride transit in an urban environment.

Mr. Atencio-Thomas reviewed an LA County past event map. Metro found that there was a marked increase in transit ridership for the CicLAvia events. The sale of TAP cards increased after the events. As a response to COVID-19. MTA provided CicLAvia funding for Slow Streets that allows for using streets as a gathering area for social distancing and safe outdoor activities.

Available funding for events has increased from \$ 2 million to \$2.5 million with a maximum of \$500,000 per event. All cities are eligible and may apply for as many events as possible. COGs are eligible to apply. There is an emphasis on equity focused communities. Cities will be required to bring forward their follow-on activities for encouraging active transportation and positive impacts on local businesses. The application was released in August and are due to Metro in September. Events must be conducted by December 2022.

Mr. Atencio-Thomas asked for questions. Director Dutra asked about e-bikes and the availability of bike racks – Mr. Atencio- Thomas said that state law allows for triple bike racks. Director Dutra asked if there are continuous bike lane maps. Atencio said the new bike lane map has been released. Director Dutra wants a bike map showing gaps in infrastructure. Marisela Santana asked about what kind of assistance comes with the effort. MTA provides grant writing assistance. MTA brings out bike share bikes and information as well as a bus to show how to load bikes. Commissioner Santana asked if the events were limited to bikes, there are transportation goals that are important but rolling walking and street activities are encouraged. MTA will provide assistance.

Director Dutra gave a recap of MTA activities starting with the FSI. He called out success of Commerce and Norwalk operators who are part of the project. He expressed concern about long term financial support for the program and is keen on seeing long term

impacts. MTA must not have financial impact that will negatively impact other programs such as the West Santa Ana Branch Light Rail Project (WSAB).

Director Dutra moved on to the WSAB where the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIR/DEIS) is out for public comment. He indicated that MTA will come to city council meetings for presentation. He said that the Metro staff is recommending Alternative 3 which is not consistent with community desires. He thanked the corridor City Managers and cities for the work they are doing on their response. The COG will take a position on choosing an alignment.

Director Dutra introduced Raffi Hamparian, Metro Federal Affairs Manager, to provide an update on the federal program. Mr. Hamparian discussed the argument between the House and Senate with the Senate being successful on a \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill. The MTA is concerned about the Capital Investment Grants (CIG) which contains funding program that contains funding for new transit projects. The program contains more formula funding by an average of 45%. Mr. Hamparian talked about the Reconciliation Bill that is \$3.5 trillion including \$60 billion for transportation.

Mr. Hamparian discussed the process for moving a rail corridor project into the federal New Starts program. A change in the process requires a certified funding plan for a project to enter the queue. New York is moving ahead with its Gateway Rail Project and will seek \$4-5 billion in federal matching funds.

Michael Turner, Metro State Affairs Manager, gave a presentation on state funding for transportation. Director Dutra asked about the availability of funding from the \$65 billion for Broadband and a potential set-aside for Broadband equity. Director Dutra asked a question about the distribution of CAPTI funding. Mr. Turner said that the CAPTI project will address Metro Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) items.

Director Dutra requested the report from the Metro Technical Advisory Committee. The report was given by Ed Norris. Mr. Norris began by stating that there were no reports given to the TAC by the Bus Operators Subcommittee (BOS) or Local Transit Service Subcommittee (LTSS). The TAC approved the Call for Projects actions for extending or altering existing projects that were ultimately approved by the Metro Board. Mr. Norris reported that Metro will approve distribution of an online survey concerning street deliveries and curb side deliveries and last mile delivery. Additional reports were given on Active Transportation Program (ATP) Cycle 5 grants for ATP projects, and it was announced that Cycle 6 will be released next February. Application workshops will be provided. A Transit Oriented Communities Implementation report update was provided and there was announcement of the release of the WSAB environmental document release emphasizing the CEQA/NEPA coverage. Mr. Norris reviewed the four candidate alignments and the No-Build alternative.

There were no questions and the meeting was adjourned at 6 pm.