

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
GATEWAY CITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

West Santa Ana Branch City Manager Technical Advisory Committee

Teleconference Meeting Via ZOOM

August 11, 2020

PRESENT: Chair, John Moreno, City of Paramount
Vice Chair, Gilbert Livas, City of Downey
William Rawlings, City of Artesia
Paul Phillips, City of Bell
Art Gallucci, City of Cerritos
Sal Lopez, City of Cudahy
Raul Alvarez, City of Huntington Park
Elaine Kunitake, Los Angeles County
Jennifer Vasquez, City of Maywood

ABSENT: Jeff Stewart, City of Bellflower
Michael O’Kelly, City of Bell Gardens
Michael Flad, City of South Gate
Carlos Fandino, City of Vernon

ALSO PRESENT: **Electeds:** Jocelyn Rivera Olivas, Rachel Roque, *Office of Supervisor Hahn*; Martin Reyes, *Office of Supervisor Solis*; Luke Klipp, *Deputy to Metro Director Mayor Garcia*.
County/Cities:, Karen Lee and Fiona Graham, *City of Artesia*; Manuel Acosta, *City of Bell*; Sabrina Chan, *City of Cerritos*; Vaniah De Rojas, Delfino Consunji, *City of Downey*; Cesar Roldan, *City of Huntington Park*; Rafael Casillas, *City of Paramount*.
Metro: Meghna Khanna, Katie Lemmon, Jacob Lieb, Mark Dierking, Brett Roberts, *Metro Staff*.
Eco-Rapid Transit: Allyn Rifkin.
Gateway Cities COG: Nancy Michali, Karen Heit, Joel Arevalos, Melani Smith, Stephanie Cadena, Sandra Mora.

Chairperson John Moreno called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm. He started the meeting by speaking to the fact that this was the seventh meeting of the City Managers TAC, and he reviewed the group’s origin and purpose. In 2019, City Managers from the WSAB corridor cities approached the Gateway Cities Council of Governments (COG) about forming a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to provide a venue for key city staff to discuss and resolve WSAB project and corridor development issues. The WSAB City Managers TAC was seen as having the potential of serving as an effective forum generating consensus on a range of technical, financial and policy challenges confronting the corridor cities. The WSAB City Managers TAC was charged with ensuring that the WSAB Project is built in a beneficial manner for corridor cities. Since its formation, the WSAB CM TAC has provided a forum for corridor cities to discuss and resolve project-related issues, built a strong working relationship with Metro

planning and construction staff, and provided technical expertise to successfully address project issues. The CM TAC has accomplished a lot in its first seven months and is ready to accomplish more in the months and years to come!

Chair Moreno asked for approval of the minutes for the July 14 WSAB City Manager TAC meeting. Vice Chair Livas, City of Downey, moved to approve, and Paul Philips, City of Bell, seconded the motion. Chair Moreno then introduced Meghna Khanna, Metro WSAB Project Manager.

Discussion of First/Last Mile Guidelines

Ms. Khanna introduced the discussion of First and Last Mile (FLM) Guidelines by providing a definition – First/Last Mile station area improvements are focused on making station and station area access easier within an ½-mile radius of each planned station. She showed where FLM planning efforts will fit within the overall WSAB Project Schedule – following the Metro Board decision on the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) which is anticipated to occur in Mid-2021.

Ms. Khanna introduced Katie Lemmon, LA Metro Senior Manager and Jacob Lieb, LA Metro Senior Director of First/Last Mile Planning. Ms. Lemmon started the presentation by providing an overview of each of the presentation’s five sections, which are listed below as the discussion titles.

WSAB TOD SIP Context

Ms. Lemmon started by saying the timing of the FLM planning process is tied to the overall project schedule and reiterated that the planning effort will be initiated after the Metro Board makes the LPA decision. The *WSAB Transit Oriented Development Strategic Implementation Plan (TOD SIP)*, completed by Metro in coordination with the WSAB Corridor cities, will provide the foundation for FLM planning efforts. FLM planning will build on the TOD SIP technical work and the identified “Mobility, Access, & Connectivity” strategies.

What is First/Last Mile Planning

By definition, FLM seeks to improve the experience of current, former, and future transit riders using the Metro system by providing walking and biking infrastructure and other mobility support services identified through a community-based process. The “First Mile” represents a transit rider’s travel from their “origin” (typically their home) to the Metro station/system and the “Last Mile” represents the transit rider’s travel to their “destination” (work, school, other). FLM planning focuses on the customer experience by providing safe, comfortable and intuitive access for transit riders from their origin to the Metro system and from the system to their destination.

FLM planning and identified improvements have five key objectives focusing on expanding the reach of transit, while supporting and encouraging Transit Oriented Communities. FLM projects also improve the safety of transit users and the rider experience, and provide community cohesiveness with Metro’s new transit projects with planning beyond the station footprint. FLM benefits range from reduced emissions to community economic benefits.

FLM Planning Steps

There are five major steps in the FLM planning process, and the first two were completed as part of the TOD SIP process:

- 1. Site Area Definition** – Using each planned WSAB station location, analytical areas were defined using a ½-mile radius for station walk access and a three-mile radius for bicycle access. In some analytical efforts, the ½-mile radius diagram is overlaid by a “square” to support network analysis, and to represent how people walk and bicycle on each city’s rectangular street system – and walking and biking distances may be slightly shorter due to the street system grid.
- 2. Analyze Existing Conditions** – As part of the TOD SIP, existing conditions were identified, mapped and analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The eight existing condition analytical categories included: pedestrian shed, bicycle connections, transit connections, points of interest (destinations), collision data (vehicle vs. pedestrians and bicycles), access volumes (street traffic volumes), high speed roads, and land use. Two of these categories – the walk and bike shed information – will provide the foundation for FLM planning efforts. In addition, the TOD SIP efforts documented and analyzed existing station area conditions to form five key maps of information: land use, zoning, neighborhood fabric, transit network, and walkability.

At the start of FLM planning efforts, TOD SIP existing conditions work will be revisited for each station area to ensure that the most up-to-date information is being used. The following three FLM planning steps will be the focus of efforts to be initiated after the LPA decision anticipated to be in Mid-2021.

3. Draft Pathway Network

Efforts to identify a draft pathway network for each station area will begin with a “walk audit.” This effort will involve identifying “on the ground” conditions using local knowledge by seeking the involvement of and input from city staff and local residents. Metro staff/consultants will use a web-based app to log conditions as staff and residents walk the station area. Photographs will be taken and used to document walk audit efforts and findings. Ms. Lemmon presented the walk audit photographs completed for Gold Line 2B and City of Los Angeles/Purple Line Sections 2 and 3 and East San Fernando Valley BRT Line and City of Inglewood/Crenshaw-LAX Line.

Chair Moreno asked when these walk audit efforts would be done? Ms. Khanna responded that they are the first step in the FLM planning process and are anticipated to be completed in the Fall of 2020.

Walk audits will focus on identifying FLM barriers falling in five groups –

- **Crossings & Connections**, such as low-visibility crossings, unsignalized crossings, short crossing times, long blocks without crossings and broken sidewalks.
- **Signage & Wayfinding**, including limited wayfinding information to/from the station and to other transit and access options.
- **Safety & Comfort**, such as lack of lighting, shade, street furniture, maintenance, uncomfortable bus stops and limited public art.
- **Allocation of Street Space**, such as streets with high vehicular speeds, narrow sidewalks and limited bicycle facilities (lanes).
- **Miscellaneous Barriers**, including limited parking, few multi-modal options, unclear transit arrival/departure information and other site-specific barriers

Ms. Lemmon presented examples of walk audits completed for other Metro projects using photographs to highlight identified FLM barriers.

The same walk audits will be used to identify existing FLM strengths, including those strengths that need enhancing and/or connecting with other physical environment strengths. This effort will help frame viable solutions and strategies. The identified strengths fall into five groups similar to those used to assess barriers –

- **Crossings & Connections**, including enhanced and new crosswalks, mid-block crosswalks, raised crossings, cut-throughs, curb extensions and all-way crossings.
- **Signage & Wayfinding**, such as signage & maps, time-to-station signage and real-time (transit arrival) information signs.
- **Safety & Comfort**, including provision of street furniture, landscaping and shade, lighting, sidewalk paving, traffic calming, enhanced bus waiting areas and freeway underpass enhancements.
- **Allocation of Street Space**, such as sidewalk widening, enhanced bike facilities, reduced vehicular lane width and signal modifications.
- **Plug-in Components**, such as kiss and ride, van pool, NEVs, bike parking, bike station, bike share and car share facilities.

Ms. Lemmon presented examples of resulting walk audits using photographs highlighting identified FLM strengths and project ideas. Walk audit input will result in mapping of draft pathway networks showing the following for each station area:

- Station area access barriers and strengths;
- Existing and possible pathways linking the future station to major station area destinations; and
- Recommended First/Last Mile improvements for each station area.

4. Community Engagement

As part of the FLM planning process, Metro will seek community input to allow residents to share their first-hand knowledge of the future station area and assist in the refining of identified improvements. There be an emphasis on equity in developing the outreach plan and the station area improvements. In the past, Metro has had success in working with community-based organizations, and city input on how to best provide outreach for each community will be sought. Metro has used popup-style events near future stations, such as bike rodeos, community workshops and existing community events to secure a wide range of input. Scheduling of this type of outreach will be dependent on existing COVID-19 restrictions.

5. Final Pathway Networks and Project Ideas

Ms. Lemmon shared examples of previous FLM work products documenting pathway networks and project ideas. Typically final work products include:

- **Final Pathway Network and Project Ideas** for each station area documented with maps and photographs and sketches.
- **Project Lists** conveying more detailed improvement information, such as the project description, station area location, project linear or square footage, type of material, etc.
- **Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) Cost Estimates** reflecting the conceptual level of design and recent costs for similar projects identified by Metro, LA County and cities. This effort supports identification of anticipated costs per station area and funding requirements.

FLM Guidelines

Metro staff is updating the First/Last Mile Guidelines in order to –

- Formalize and standardize the FLM process.
- Delineate roles and responsibilities between local jurisdictions and Metro for project delivery.
- Outline funding options.

Draft FLM guidelines will be available for public review in the Fall of 2020 with Metro Board action anticipated in Late 2020. Input on the FLM guidelines has been provided by a Gateway Cities Stakeholder working group and their input will be sought as the guidelines are finalized.

TAC Discussion

Chair Moreno asked for CM TAC member comments. Hearing none, he asked several questions.

When in the FLM process are cost responsibilities identified, i.e., who pays for what?

Ms. Khanna responded that cost estimates are developed during the FLM planning process and could be funded through the 3% Local Contribution. The September CM TAC meeting will provide more detailed information as part of the planned 3% Local Contribution presentation.

Can you provide an example of the 3% Local Contribution cost?

Ms. Khanna replied that a city's local contribution will be based on 3% of: their percentage of the light rail project construction cost (trackage and station) within their city plus the cost estimate for the FLM improvements. This will be discussed further starting in September. Ms. Lemmon added that the exercise to prioritize projects located within each station area's walk will be part of FLM work effort, and the final 3% Local Contribution will reflect FLM projects being completed by a city using other funding sources. Other cities have used ATP and STIP funding. There are different ways that Metro and cities have worked together.

Can you provide examples of past FLM improvements and who paid for which projects?

Ms. Lemmon replied that only the City of Inglewood (on the Crenshaw-LAX Line currently under construction) has proceeded this far in the FLM process. Metro staff worked with the City of Pomona on the Gold Line to ensure station area improvements fit with the FLM station area plan. Ms. Khanna added that there are no examples at this point to her knowledge; she can work with Ms. Lemmon to identify possible project examples.

Is the FLM planning process a new program created for the WSAB project?

Ms. Lemmon responded that the FLM planning process was created in 2016 by the Metro Board. It has served as a starting part for capital projects identified related to Phases 2 and 3 of the Purple Line (subway) project. The FLM process was not followed prior to that. Ms. Khanna clarified that the FLM planning process was followed for the Purple Line, Crenshaw-LAX Line, East San Fernando Valley BRT Project and Gold Line Phase 2B. Ms. Lemmon stated that it was followed for the B Line (former Red Line subway) as well.

Rafael Casillas, City of Paramount, asked: currently he is seeking ATP funding for bicycle improvements, is there a way for the future FLM planning process requirement to provide support for his application?

Ms. Lemmon replied that ATP Cycle 5 applications are due September 15, and Metro can provide grant writing assistance. The FLM has not been initiated/finalized so it cannot support his current grant application. He can add a reference in the grant application that his project will implement the WSAB TOD SIP Mobility Strategy recommendations.

Chair Moreno requested final questions and hearing none, turned the meeting over to Ms. Khanna to provide WSAB project updates.

Project Updates/Discussion Items

Ms. Khanna provided a WSAB Project update by starting with a review of the project and study area information. The WSAB rail project is 19 miles in length and has 12 new stations and five new Park & Ride facilities. The WSAB study area is 98 square miles in size, and its population is projected to grow from the current 1.4 million residents to 1.6 million by 2042. Study area employment is forecasted to grow from 619,000 jobs today to 747,000 jobs in 2042. In addition to the significant population and employment numbers, study area population and employment densities are five times higher than that of Los Angeles County.

Four “Build” Alternatives have been identified and are being studied in the draft EIS/EIR document:

- **Alternative 1:** Los Angeles to Pioneer with two design options in the Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) area –
 - **Design Option 1 (Alternative 1)** – Northern terminus behind the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) Building on the east side of LAUS, not at the LAUS Forecourt (west side or front of LAUS).
 - **Design Option 2 (Alternative 1)** – Adds the Little Tokyo Station.
- **Alternative 2:** 7th/Metro Center to Pioneer
- **Alternative 3:** Slauson/A Line (Blue) to Pioneer
- **Alternative 4:** I-105/C Line (Green) to Pioneer

Studying the project in these four segments allows the Metro Board flexibility in future decision-making depending on funding availability.

The WSAB Project Schedule currently remains as previously presented with the Draft EIS/R Release in Early 2021 and the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) selection by the Metro Board in Mid-2021. First and Last Mile Planning and the P3 Request for Qualifications (RFQ) will follow the LPA selection. In Late 2021, Metro will certify the EIR document and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will certify the EIS document with a Record of Decision (ROD). Metro staff is reassessing the project schedule given COVID impacts to third party partners on all projects. In many cases, while Metro staff has continued to move full speed ahead, there have been pandemic impacts to project partners.

Ms. Khanna spoke to the major challenge of coordinating future freight interface decisions with the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) and the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles along the 10 miles of shared rail corridor that are either freight-owned or have freight operating rights:

- Four miles – Wilmington & La Habra rail branches owned by UPRR; and
- Six miles – San Pedro Subdivision owned by the Ports with UPRR operating rights.

Securing the cooperation of the UPRR is critical to meeting the WSAB Project schedule and will have project cost implications. Metro staff has been speaking with UPRR staff on a regular basis, but coordination efforts have been challenging due to UPRR staff furloughs in response to the pandemic. A draft memorandum outlining all concept studies to date has been prepared and shared with UPRR.

Ms. Khanna provided an overview of the latest I-105/C Line Station design and operational concept. Two new stations will be built – one for the WSAB Line and a second added for the C Line in the median of the I-105 Freeway. There will be three bridges over the I-105 – an extension of Façade Avenue; a new

LRT, pedestrian and freight bridge; and a pedestrian and stormwater bridge extending south from Industrial Avenue in South Gate. She spoke about a new challenge – Caltrans and the State Office of Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) have identified the “Century Freeway – Transitway Historic District.” The Historic District Boundaries include the location of the project’s three bridges. The WSAB project does plan to demolish these bridges, which are identified as a character-defining historic elements.

The next project steps include:

- Coordinating I-105 bridge design decisions to be documented in a MOU with SHPO.
- Coordinating with UPRR.
- Preparing an administrative draft EIS/R for FTA review with revisions through three review cycles.
- Once the environmental document and 15% design is completed, coordinating with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), Caltrans, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (river crossings) and Los Angeles Department of Power and Water (LADPW).

TAC Discussion

Chair Moreno asked for questions and comments from TAC members. He commented that the historically designated bridges are unattractive in his opinion. Ms. Khanna replied that the historic designation is not based on architectural significance and that the bridges can be replaced with an “in-kind” new bridges by the project. She is working closely with local historic agencies and groups along with the SHPO.

Status of the Master Cooperative Agreements

Ms. Khanna provided an overview of the status of her meetings with project cities regarding the execution of Master Cooperative Agreements (MCAs). Meeting with six cities have been held and their questions answered – Bell, Bellflower, Downey, Huntington Park, Paramount and South Gate. She is working with the cities of Artesia and Cerritos to respond to questions and schedule meetings. At this time, the only cities not responding are Cudahy and Vernon – Vernon primarily due to the short project distance located in their city (500 feet).

TAC Discussion

Chair Moreno asked for questions and comments from TAC members. He requested further information on the MCA chart being presented and what the checkmark indicated. Ms. Khanna replied that the checkmark meant that she had met with the city and was now working with them and sending updated MCA versions for their review. For example, the City of Bell provided input on the standards to be used for project elements in their city. She indicated that the MCA approval process was going well and thanked the cities for their work and assistance.

TAC Member Discussion

Chair Moreno asked if there were any further TAC member questions or comments; there were none.

Next TAC Meeting

The next CM TAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 15th and Chair Moreno said it will be a very important meeting to attend as it will provide an initial presentation on the 3% Local Contribution requirement. He urged TAC members to attend and be proactive in the discussion.

Chair Moreno made a final call for comments and hearing none, adjourned the meeting at 3:23 pm.