MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE GATEWAY CITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
Chair - MTA Director Diane DuBois
Gateway Cities COG Office, 16401 Paramount Blvd., Paramount, CA 90723
November 6, 2013

CALL TO ORDER: Diane DuBois called the meeting to order at 4:20 pm. Roll-call was taken by self-introduction.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Rosa Perez – Huntington Park, Gene Daniels – Paramount, Diane DuBois – MTA Chair, Ron Bates – Pico Rivera, Mohammad Mostahkami – South Gate, Tony Lima – Artesia, Bill Pagett – Paramount, Dana Pynn – Long Beach Transit,

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Michael Ponce – Avalon, Bruce Barrows – Cerritos, Tom Modica – Long Beach, James Johnson – Long Beach, Ken Farfsing – Signal Hill, Julie Moore – Don Knabe Representative

OTHERS PRESENT: Jerry Wood – GCCOG, Yvette Kirrin – I-5 JPA, David Hershenson – MTA, Vin Kumar – Caltrans, Andres Molina – Parsons Brinkerhoff, Jessica Meaney – So Cal Policy Director, Celso Hernandez - CH2M Hill

Director DuBois presented a recap of last month’s MTA Board proceedings. Some significant decisions were reached at October Board meeting such as the design for Union Station Master Plan and a bus stop usability study is now in the works. There was extensive discussion over two items on the board agenda concerning the potential new public comment rules and the continuation of the deferral of the maintenance fee for the congestion reduction program.

Director DuBois updated the committee on the California Freight Advisory Committee, which took place earlier today in San Diego. CFAC is still working to make sure that California is ready for providing input on policies favorable to the state to the full federal freight advisory committee. California leads the nation in freight movement.

Director DuBois discussed the I-710 maintenance demonstration. This project is underway. Minor landscaping preparations and debris removal are evident on the I-710.

Director DuBois presented the congestion reduction project and issues. The program thus far has been a tremendous success. Transponders sales have far exceeded expectations. At the Board meeting, however, there was concern by some Board members about maintaining the waiver of the monthly maintenance fee. There is evidence that increase in transponder sales will eventually close the deficit left by
waiving the fee. Reinstating the maintenance fee will make customers upset and cause occasional users to abandon the program. The Committee was urged to recommend that the COG Board approve sending the attached letter expressing support for permanently waiving the monthly fee.

Director DuBois discussed Metro’s Call for Projects (CFP). The source of local funding has decreased from over $1 billion in previous years to $190 million available through this Call cycle. The competition for this money has increased significantly, that the costs of applying for Call money is significant. There is subregional conversation regarding recommending that the funds allocated under the CFP process be allocated on a formula basis. There are probably other options out there to replace the CFP process that would probably be more beneficial. Mohammad Moshtakami expressed these same concerns and how some regions lack the financial ability to apply for the funding. A non-competitive process might be best. Karen Heit discussed the potential of the GCCOG’s Strategic Transportation Plan and how it has to potential to better equip cities to get funding for projects. Mohammad Moshtakami explained the difficulty associated with local match requirements of the CFP and that disadvantaged cities need to be given benefits. Director DuBois explained that members of the Board and the cities need to express their concerns with the process to the MTA through responding to the attached survey.

Director Dubois discussed the Airport Metro Connector Project. Metro is working with LAWA to connect LAX with the rest of LA County’s transportation network. LAX still needs to complete their master plan and this is causing delays in being able to get this project up and running. MTA will be breaking ground on construction of the Crenshaw/LAX light rail line within the next few months. It is important to know what LAX wants to do concretely with this project before significant work is completed on this line

Director Dubois updated the Committee about LOSSAN. Orange County, who is the new managing agency, will be presenting a budget that must cover all of the start-up costs for the new entity.

Director DuBois discussed the Open Streets letter that the COG sent to the MTA last month. We have yet to receive a response from Metro but we are hopeful that they will take our suggestions of changing the application deadline and putting a cap on funds, into consideration.

Director DuBois discussed SB 811. This bill dictated the inclusion of the Community Alternative, known as CA 7, into the I-710 project EIR/EIS as a separate alternative. This action would have set the project back and added an additional $3-5 million to the cost of the environmental document. The Bill was vetoed by the governor last month.

Director DuBois explained that the attached MTA Legislative Matrix explains what is happening for transportation legislation in Sacramento and Washington DC.
Director DuBois presented the attached project list for the I-605 hot spot interchanges improvements which was approved by the MTA Board. These projects will proceed to implementation over the coming years.

Director DuBois presented the MTA Board approved bike share program, which may begin development soon throughout the transit system.

Mohammad Moshtakami inquired about the implementation and status of the freeway beautification project and process. He was referred to MTA project manager Ian Fairweather for more information. Ron Bates expressed his concern about homeless encampments presenting problems for the whole process. Richard Powers discussed the homeless program and committee within the gateway cities. Discussion included resources that are associated with the program, the hotline, funds that are allocated and the success of the program.

David Hershenson discussed two items in regards to matters from the MTA. (1) There will be a Regional transit provider workshop held in the City of Long Beach on December 3rd. Issues such as bus stop usability will be discussed. There will also be public hearings on Metro’s service changes in February. (2) work that is being done on the Metro Blue Line. Such work will include catenary improvements and station canopies. Dana Pynn inquired about the fare restructuring forums and whether there will be public hearings. David Hershenson explained that yes, the public will be able to have input and the MTA will be hosting public hearings.

Jerry Wood, COG Engineer, reported on the GCCOG’s Strategic Transportation Plan (STP). Results of the STP are significant. Funding and financing strategy sections of the plan are teeing up. Modeling is being finalized and results of the STP are actually starting to be used by cities. We are now coordinating with other COGs who are trying to do something similar so that all of LA County can ultimately have a comprehensive plan. There was discussion about the correlation between the existence of a plan and receiving funding. There will be a major event on December 4th at Performing Arts Center in Cerritos to present the STP to the COG elected officials. There was discussion about the STP’s usefulness and ability to identify impacts with the Gold Line Project. There was discussion about the truck platooning project and its relationship to the STP. There was a lot of praise and support for this project.

Yvette Kirrin, Executive Director I-5 JPA, discussed Caltrans and I-5 construction. She discussed a community meeting in Santa Fe Springs November 18th that will provide an overview of all construction activities that are going on and substantial updates on all of the projects. There will be a big weekend closure of the northbound I-5 on November 16, 17, and 18. Kirrin discussed a draft letter of support that she will be coming to the board with in support of a school peak shuttle service during the 24 months of construction and closure. Director DuBois expressed concern about having a meeting about his at the same time as having a full closure of the 5.
Jerry Wood updated the COG on the I-710 project. A lot of things have changed over the last few years in terms of this project. The new traffic modeling is well on its way. The early action sound walls will be going to the TAC for approval. Wood discussed the I-405 HOV widening that could happen in Orange County.

Wood went on to update the committee on the 91/605/405 project. The COG’s relationship with OCTA was discussed. Orange County Cities are working with Cal State University Fullerton on models and cooperation efforts. Wood discussed the SR-60 project and explained that we should be able to hire a consultant for it next year. We are moving forward with first 35 intersections with I-605 project. The STP is being used to coordinate projects throughout the region, but we want to hire a program manager to keep track of all of these different projects at the MTA. Ron Bates discussed the intense congestion that is experienced on the I-605 freeway. Mohammad Moshtakami discussed possible options for relieving traffic and utilizing HOV lanes. Tony Lima asked about the possibility of altering schedules for truck drivers to relieve congestions. Wood stated that most likely the trucking companies are doing this already to the best of their ability. Discussion continued around this off-peak delivery scheduling and it was ultimately decided that SCAG should look into this and that the COG would suggest it to SCAG.

Karen Heit updated the committee on Eco Rapid Transit project. Ron Bates explained that the Gold Line project team is learning from the Eco Rapid Transit project and are talking to Mike Kodama for help in developing their line.

Mohammad Moshtakami thanked the committee for taking concerns and comments from the last COG meeting concerning the railroads.

There will not be a transportation committee meeting in December, the STP roll-out will happen instead.

Items were approved after a quorum was established.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm