

To: Chui L. Tsang, Superintendent/President
From: Don Girard, Senior Director, Government Relations
Re: Expo Phase II Draft EIR and Related Issues
Date: February 25, 2009

The Exposition Metro Line Construction Authority (a joint powers agency of the MTA (Metro), Los Angeles County, and the cities of Los Angeles, Santa Monica, and Culver City) has prepared a Draft EIR on the extension of the Exposition Light Rail line from Culver City to downtown Santa Monica. The DEIR studies a number of alternative routes. The Authority will choose one of the routes, consider other public comments, and issue a Final EIR later this year. Comments are due March 13, 2009.

Importantly, the extension now includes a 17th Street station that will be of great benefit to Santa Monica College and its students and staff. The extension is planned to begin operations in 2015.

This memo provides a brief description of the planned light rail extension; a brief background description of the current and planned light rail system; some issues related to the 17th Street station and to the maintenance facility; and an update on College activities in support of the project.

EXPO PHASE II PLANNED EXTENSION

The rail line enters Santa Monica along the Exposition ROW (right-of-way). There is an aerial crossing at Bundy; a street-level crossing at Centinela with crossing gates and a new traffic signal; a street-level crossing at Stewart with crossing gates only; a street-level crossing at 26th with crossing gates and the existing signal; and an aerial crossing at Cloverfield and at Olympic.

From here, under the Olympic alignment, the rail line runs in the median strip of Olympic in “street running mode,” which means it operates as a street vehicle and uses the existing traffic signals at 20th, 17th, and 14th. Left turns for vehicles are permitted on Olympic. Aerial crossings are provided at the remaining intersections and the line terminates at 4th. Under the Colorado alignment, it crosses at street-level at 20th and 19th with crossing gates only; and begins street-running mode at 17th along Colorado to the terminus at 4th Street. Left turns for vehicles are prohibited on Colorado.

There is an aerial station at Bundy and Exposition; a street-level station at Bergamot (just east of 26th at Olympic); a street-level station at either 17th and Colorado or at 17th and Olympic; and either an aerial or a street-level station at 4th and Colorado.

There is also a light rail maintenance facility near Stewart and Exposition, on the current Verizon property.

The trains are planned to be three cars in length, and will run every five minutes during peak hours. The trains are powered electrically, by means of overhead power lines.

THE METRO RAIL SYSTEM

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority (Metro) operates a passenger rail system that includes subways, light rail, and bus rapid transit (BRT). Metro and other providers such as Big Blue Bus offer local bus transit that connects to the passenger rail service. Interregional heavy rail radiates from Union Station, with various operators providing service to San Bernardino, Riverside, Orange County, Antelope Valley, Ventura, and points beyond. The entire rail and bus system forms a regional transit network.

There are three operating light rail lines (Blue, from downtown LA to Long Beach; Gold, from Union Station to Pasadena; and Green, from Norwalk to the south bay area); one line under construction (Expo, from downtown LA to Culver City); and one line under consideration (Crenshaw, from Wilshire to the Century Freeway, which may be either light rail or a BRT). Metro intends to extend two of these lines (Gold, from Union Station to East LA and also further east from Pasadena; and Expo, from Culver City to Santa Monica).

Passengers can navigate throughout the Metro Rail Service system by means of a vertical passenger connection between the Blue Line and the Green Line, or by means of the Red Line subway that connects to the Blue Line, the Expo Line, and the Gold Line. The BRT in the San Fernando Valley (the Orange Line) also connect to the Red Line subway. (The Purple Line subway parallels the Red Line subway from Union Station and extends to Wilshire and Western. This line could become the “subway to the sea” at a future time.)

In general, the tracks of the light rail lines do not interconnect physically, except for the Blue Line, which shares common track with the Expo Line from downtown Los Angeles to south of Pico. The Gold Line operates separately, and the Green Line operates in an aerial configuration that does not allow easy connection of the rail cars to the Blue Line.

LIGHT RAIL MAINTENANCE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

According to a June 19, 2008 report from Metro, there is currently a light rail fleet of 121 cars (trains are made up of either two cars or three cars). Heavy duty and light duty maintenance is provided for the Blue Line at a 13-acre facility in Long Beach with a capacity of 86 cars; heavy duty and light duty maintenance is provided for the Green Line at a 13.5-acre facility in Lawndale with a capacity of 39 cars; and light duty maintenance only is provided for the Gold Line at a shared facility in downtown Los Angeles near the I-5 and I-10 interchange with a capacity of 50 cars.

With regard to Expo Line Phase I (to Culver City), the report states that Metro has been unable to secure the land intended for use as a heavy-duty and light duty maintenance yard (it was to be adjacent to the Blue Line facility in Long Beach). A small, narrow site, under 2 acres, in South Los Angeles alongside the Blue Line, will provide mid-day storage and possibly some cleaning facilities for Expo Phase I, with a maximum capacity of 15 cars.

For 2030, the report projects a system-wide shortage of maintenance capacity of 215 cars – a shortage of 50 spaces for the extended Gold Line; a shortage of 82 spaces for the Green Line and Crenshaw Line; and a shortage of 83 spaces for the Blue Line and Expo I and Expo II Line.

A November 19, 2008 report looked at 48 candidate sites for maintenance facilities, and narrowed the list to nine priority sites. A February 19, 2009 report provides specificity about these nine sites. The first priority is to construct a “Full Service Maintenance Facility” at the Union Station yards and adjacent properties (148 acres). This would relieve all other facilities of this function. Priorities for the Blue Line include the acquisition of two properties totaling 43 acres next to the facility in Long Beach. There are two priorities for the Expo Line. One is the acquisition of either 26 acres or alternatively 18 acres in an industrial section of downtown Los Angeles, west of the Los Angeles River and just north of Washington Boulevard. The other is the acquisition of the 9.17-acre Verizon site in Santa Monica.

ISSUES

1. THE SMC OLYMPIC SHUTTLE LOT AND THE VERIZON PROPERTY

It is worth noting at this point that the Verizon site is 6.82 acres; the SMC property is 2.35 acres. Together, these properties are 9.17 acres. The Metro report dated February 19, 2009 indicates an intention to acquire 9.17 acres.

Metro needs 59 more spaces of maintenance capacity to open Expo II in 2016 (Expo II is projected to be the highest ridership of all light rail lines; Metro will open Expo I with a deficiency of 14 spaces of maintenance capacity).

The Draft EIR references only the purchase of the Verizon site (there is no acreage provided); the map excludes the SMC property.

There are a range of outcomes that must be considered, including the consequence to Metro should the College acquire the Verizon property, and the consequence to the College should Metro decide to acquire the College property.

2. ALTERNATIVES FOR METRO FOR A WESTSIDE MAINTENANCE FACILITY

The above discussion is intended to provide a sense of the range of alternatives available to Metro should it fail to acquire the Verizon site. Many of these alternatives are not sufficiently explored in the Draft EIR.

Of additional interest are a number of opportunities to use portions of the Exposition right-of-way where the right-of-way is more than 100 feet in width, for purposes of layover and storage.

Also, Metro has identified a strong need to build a regional connector facility in downtown Los Angeles, which would be a central yard located near the point of juncture of the trunk lines, that could handle most of the maintenance needs of the light rail fleet.

There is also significant cost differential of a Westside maintenance facility, compared to industrial land. The cost range in the February 19, 2009 report is from \$5 to over \$233 a square foot.

In addition, the College has a key concern regarding the impact of the maintenance facility on the operation and continued safety of the Olympic Shuttle, as discussed below.

3. TRAFFIC CONFLICT OF RAIL MAINTENANCE YARD AND SHUTTLE LOT

There will be three tracks in the east/west direction across Stewart Street with crossing arms, lights, and bells as a result of the maintenance facility. The rail crossing is literally a few yards to the north from the entrance/exit of the College Olympic Shuttle Lot. At peak times, trains will pass twice every five minutes at approximately 30 miles per hour. At non-peak times, some trains will pass at 30 miles per hour, and other trains will be decelerating into the maintenance station at speeds as low as 5 miles per hour.

SMC students and staff are directed to enter from and exit to Olympic Boulevard. Exiting currently requires an immediate right turn into the Exposition right-of-way, and then crossing what will become three sets of tracks. The high activity at this crossing and the varying train speeds present significant safety concerns that will need to be addressed as Metro moves to establishing a maintenance yard at this location.

4. SHUTTLE CONNECTIVITY TO THE 17TH STREET & COLORADO STATION

The connectivity of the 17th Street station on Colorado Avenue to the SMC main campus merits comment. In order to arrive at the main campus on the eastbound side of Pico Boulevard (to take advantage of SMC's planned new transit plaza on the south side of Pico Boulevard in front of Drescher Hall), the shuttle will need to travel south either on 14th Street or on 17th Street. This implies that either: (1) 17th Street must be reclassified in order to permit public transit vehicles; or (2) a left turn must be provided on 14th Street for a westbound bus traveling on Colorado Avenue. Under the Colorado Avenue alignment plan, left turns are prohibited on the entire length from 16th Street down to 5th Street. College staff has met twice with the City on this issue, and our sense is that the City is strongly committed to providing a solution.

This problem is not present at the 17th Street station for the Olympic alignment, as left turns are permitted, the travel route is shorter, and 14th Street is a collector street with public transit currently in operation.

Integrated into the public transit connectivity between the 17th Street station and the campus are opportunities for dedicated bike travel and enhanced pedestrian experiences.

5. THE COLORADO ALIGNMENT IS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

Both the Olympic Boulevard route and the Colorado Avenue route provide for a station at 17th Street. Clearly, Olympic Boulevard is closer to the College's main campus than Colorado Avenue. Nonetheless, the Olympic station would be about a half-mile from the main campus,

which is considered the maximum distance that most people are willing to walk to get to their destination. The College will need to operate a shuttle to the Olympic Boulevard station in any event.

The Colorado Avenue option respects a number of community design principles that the College has also adopted in its Facility Master Plan, including visual aesthetics and a pedestrian-friendly and interactive environment.

The College will be supportive of the Colorado Avenue alignment, with the provision that the connectivity issue be properly resolved.

ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF EXPO PHASE II

College staff is organizing two rallies in support of the extension of light rail to Santa Monica. The first is Tuesday, March 3, 2009, at the City Council hearing on its recommendations to the Expo Authority regarding the Draft EIR and the choice of alignments. We have rented two buses, have heard from students and faculty who are ready to attend, have 100 t-shirts ready for the occasion, and will be coordinating speakers to represent the College. Our message, that Expo will fight congestion, that the 17th Street station will be a benefit for our students and the community, and that we support the alignment on Colorado Avenue, should be well represented and well received. We are also preparing a similar turnout for a future Expo Authority meeting.

CONCLUSION

The extension of passenger rail to the Westside will provide College staff and students connectivity to a wide network of transit options. The addition of the 17th Street station is an extraordinary response by City of Santa Monica planners and the Expo Authority to the mission of the College and a testament SMC's value to the community and the region. SMC will be enthusiastic users of this new service. Certainly in the scheme of things, it's not surprising to encounter a few unexpected issues. We are prepared to be fully engaged and will work with our partner agencies and community to make passenger rail a real plus for Santa Monica.

Attachment: Metro Measure R Project Delivery Committee Report 6, February 18, 2009, "Rail Division Potential Storage Site Assessment Report"



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**MEASURE R PROJECT DELIVERY COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 18, 2009**

SUBJECT: RAIL DIVISION POTENTIAL STORAGE SITE ASSESSMENT REPORT

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE CONSOLIDATED RAIL YARD ANALYSIS

RECOMMENDATION

Receive and file the attached response to the Board motion adopted at the December 4, 2008 meeting related to potential sites for developing light rail facilities and increasing the storage capacity for light rail vehicles.

ISSUE

On November 19, 2008 the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) presented a "receive and file" board report to the Planning and Programming Committee related to new light rail yard facilities. In that report, we identified a number of potentially viable candidate locations for new light rail yard facilities. In response to that report, the Board approved a motion (Attachment A) directing the CEO to answer several detailed questions and to provide recommendations regarding acquiring yard properties. Specifically the motion asked for responses to the following items:

1. Identify projected Measure R revenues available to acquire real property for rail yard and maintenance facility development, on both a cash flow and bond (debt) basis.

Response: Measure R provides for 2% of annual receipts to be set aside for Metro Rail Capital including System Improvements, Rail Yards, and Rail Cars which we estimate will total approximately \$790 million over the life of Measure R (Attachment B). We have not determined yet how much of this funding would be available for rail yard development versus the cars and system wide improvements. Attachment B shows a cash flow breakdown of what might be available with the full \$790 million and secondly with an assumption that one-third of the funding would go towards rail yards. If one-third is available for rail yards, the total would be approximately \$263 million over the next 30 years. If the Measure R monies are bonded, the money would be available much earlier, but would yield a reduced amount. A future revenue stream totaling \$263 million would yield approximately \$110 million in today's dollars. In addition to the 2% Measure R funding category, the cost estimates for many of the light rail projects funded in Measure R also contain allowances for rail yard acquisition and construction.

2. Provide preliminary cost estimates for the nine sites identified in the "Consolidated Rail Yard Site Yard Analysis Report".

Response: The cost of industrial land and buildings range from an estimated low of approximately \$5 per square foot to over \$233 per square foot based on a survey of properties in the Los Angeles area. This does not include any cost of potential environmental mitigations or cleanup.

3. Assess the availability of the nine sites identified in the "Consolidated Rail Yard Site Yard Analysis Report" and estimate of the best case, probable, and worst case schedule to acquire each property.

Response: None of these sites are actively listed for sale. This does not necessarily mean the property owner would not make the site available. Staff estimates that the time frame to acquire any of the sites would be two to three years.

The following conditions would constitute the best Best Case Acquisition Scenario:

- (a) Property Owner and Metro quickly agree to terms and price of sale;
- (b) Site has little or no environmental contamination;
- (c) Relocation of existing businesses or tenants accomplished without delaying start of rail yard site development; and
- (d) No unforeseen delays in obtaining environmental clearances.

In a worst case scenario, acquisition could take significantly longer than two years, particularly if the following issues were encountered:

- (a) Non-cooperative property owner;
- (b) Relocation delayed due to lack of suitable relocation sites or the cost of suitable relocation facilities strains development budget and delays development time frame;
- (c) Cost and time to remediate site conditions exceeds development time frame; and
- (d) Community opposition delays project and increases cost beyond budget.

4. Recommend whether or not it would be advantageous for us to acquire one or more of the properties in the near term?

Response: Yes, it would be advantageous for us (or the appropriate construction authority) to acquire light rail yard facilities in the near term. A desirable scenario would be to acquire property for rail car storage and light maintenance yard sites along the Exposition Light Rail Line Phase II, the Gold Line Foothill Extension and the Crenshaw Corridor transit project as well as a central yard for heavy maintenance and general system wide storage.

The yards for each individual line would provide overnight storage with reduced dead-head time. A centralized yard site would provide "heavy maintenance" in

addition to daily service and cleaning of light rail cars. Currently, our only single heavy maintenance facility is located along the southern end of the Blue line and is limited in capacity.

A. Which properties should we acquire?

Response: Attachment C highlights the characteristics of all nine sites as well as what lines would be served at each location. Based on the answer to question #4, we would recommend the acquisition of a property along the Foothill Extension, the Exposition Line Phase II, the Crenshaw Corridor and one location in the Central Los Angeles area.

B. What would be the proposed schedule to acquire the properties?

Response: It would be advantageous to start actions needed to acquire these properties as soon as possible, based on the Measure R anticipated time frames for light rail projects. A detailed schedule to acquire the properties will need to be developed as more information is determined regarding near term revenues and cash flows, the long range plan update, development of individual project funding plans and other information.

C. Provide an analysis of how much of the current and future rail yard demand would be accommodated by acquiring and developing the recommended properties.

Response: As reported in the November 2008 Board Report, we anticipate a need for an additional 145 spaces by 2016 over what we have today and a total additional 269 spaces over what we have today by the year 2030. With the scenario suggested above, we would expect to accommodate these numbers of vehicles. More time, however, is needed to prepare a full operations plan, a phase-in program and what services can be located at what locations to optimize operational efficiencies.

D. Provide a preliminary funding plan to acquire the proposed properties.

Response: More time is needed to develop this funding plan.

5. If none of the properties are recommended for acquisition, identify an alternative strategy to meet the current and future rail yard demand.

Response: We would recommend pursuing some of the properties.

BACKGROUND

On June 19, 2008, we presented a Rail Division Capacity Assessment Report (Report) to the Operations Committee that detailed the state of existing light rail storage and maintenance facilities and the need to expand existing capacity to support the increase in new light rail vehicles. That assessment identified several preliminary activities that would help ensure development of the maintenance and storage capacity that is needed to support our light rail system. On November 19, 2008 we presented a preliminary review of 48 locations in the

county adjacent to a light rail or planned light rail facility with nine of the sites highlighted as most promising for our light rail use. Several of the potential sites are being reviewed as part of the planning and environmental studies for the Exposition Light Rail Transit Phase II and Crenshaw corridor projects.

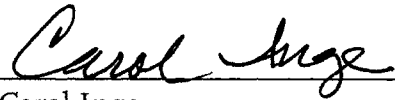
NEXT STEPS

We will coordinate with the Exposition and Gold Line Foothill Construction Authorities regarding provision of yards for those projects. We will begin active discussions with the appropriate landowners to determine availability and potential terms and conditions for acquisition. We will continue to analyze the preferred sites to develop a potential acquisition schedule, funding plan, and phasing if appropriate. We will periodically return to the Board with updates, progress reports and recommendations for action.

ATTACHMENT(S)

- A. Board Motion
- B. Table 1: Estimated Measure R Cashflow Forecast for Systems Improvements to Rail Yard Facilities and Rail Cars
- C. Table 2: Property General Characteristics

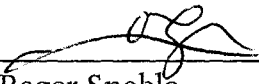
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MOTION

November 19, 2008

MOTION: Planning & Programming Committee
Item 11 - Rail Yard Capacity and Demand

As MTA plans for the continued expansion of light rail operations in the region, new maintenance and storage facilities will be required.

The Pasadena Gold Line Midway Yard (Division 21) was originally intended as a temporary facility and will be used for East Side Gold Line operations as well. The East Side Gold Line is scheduled to begin operations in June 2009, but no dedicated yard is included as part of the project. Exposition Line (Phase I) is scheduled to begin operations in FY 2010, but this project is experiencing difficulty in securing a dedicated yard as well.

MTA staff indicates that without additional rail yard capacity, operational efficiency (and operating expenses) will be impacted. This will be further exacerbated when Exposition (Phase II), possibly Crenshaw (depending on the final Board decision), the Regional Connector, and other light rail lines funded by Measure R come on line.

MTA staff has also indicated that a consolidated rail yard will provide economies of scale and improve the overall operation efficiency of the rail system.

Up to 2% of Measure R funds could be used for new rail yards and maintenance facilities. In addition, real estate prices have dropped and there may be an opportunity to acquire one or more parcels to meet current and future rail yard needs at an attractive price.

WE THEREFORE MOVE that the MTA Board of Directors direct the CEO to report back during the January 2009 Board cycle on the following:

1. Identify projected Measure R revenues available to acquire real property for rail yard and maintenance facility development, on both a cash flow and bond (debt) basis
2. Provide preliminary cost estimates for the nine sites identified in the "Consolidated Rail Yard Site Yard Analysis Report" (p. 9, Table 5)

3. Assess the availability of the nine sites identified in the "Consolidated Rail Yard Site Yard Analysis Report" (p. 9, Table 5) and estimate of the best case, probable, and worst case schedule to acquire each property.

4. Recommend whether or not it would be advantageous for the MTA to acquire one or more of the properties in the near term, and if yes:

A. Which properties should MTA acquire?

B. What would be the proposed schedule to acquire the properties?

C. Analysis of how much of the current and future rail yard demand would be accommodated by acquiring and developing the recommended properties.

D. Preliminary funding plan to acquire the proposed properties.

5. If none of the properties are recommended for acquisition, identify an alternative strategy to meet the current and future rail yard demand.

Table 1: Estimated Measure R Cashflow Forecast for Metro Rail Capital: Systems Improvements, Rail Yards and Rail Cars							
Years	FY10-14	FY15-19	FY20-25	FY26-30	FY31-35	FY36-40	Plan Total
Full Funding	\$72.5M	\$95.7M	\$143.9M	\$146.7M	\$172.5M	\$158.7M	\$790.2M
1/3 Funding	\$24.14M	\$31.87M	\$47.92M	\$48.85M	\$57.44M	\$52.85M	\$263.14M

Table 2: Property General Characteristics

Light Rail Transit Lines	Potential Yard Site	Site Area (acres)	Site Storage Capacity (# of vehicles)	Storage Need (# of vehicles in 2030)	Type of Facility
All	Alhambra/N. Mission/I-5	148	592	390 (total LRT Fleet)	Heavy Maintenance
	Blue Line Division 11 Adjacent	24.78	99		Storage*
Blue	Blue Line Division 11 Expansion	17.1	68	92	Storage*
	S. Santa Fe/E. Washington	25.9	104		Storage*
Expo 1 & 2	Olympic/Stewart/Centinel	9.17	37	77	Storage*
Gold Line (Pasadena & Eastside)	Irwindale	21	84		Light to Medium*
	Irwindale	24.1	96.4	100	Light to Medium*
Green/Crenshaw	Rosecrans/Sepulveda/PCCH	32.12	128	61	Storage*
Crenshaw	Osage/83rd/Harbor Subdivision RR	9.44	38	60	Storage*

*Assumes construction of a centrally located Full Service Maintenance Facility. If a central facility is not built, then one or more End of the Line yards will require construction of a Full Service Maintenance Facility.