



## WESTSIDE CITIES

- BEVERLY HILLS
- CULVER CITY
- LOS ANGELES
- SANTA MONICA
- WEST HOLLYWOOD
- COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

May 21, 2008

Mr. Roger Snoble  
Chief Executive Officer  
Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
One Gateway Plaza  
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2953

Dear Mr. Snoble:

In your letter of May 6, 2008, addressed to our Executive Director, you requested input from the Westside Cities Council of Governments (WSCCOG) regarding the projects we recommend be included in a half-cent transportation sales tax measure should the Metro Board decide to put a sales tax measure on the November 2008 ballot.

On May 15, 2008 the WSCCOG Governing Directors directed this response. The WSCCOG urges the Metro Board to put this measure on the November ballot, and to include the following projects in the list of those that would be funded through this ballot measure:

1. **The Exposition Light Rail to Santa Monica Must on the List of Projects to be Included in a Half-cent Transportation Sales Tax Measure.** The Exposition Light Rail to Santa Monica is the one of three WSCCOG priority transportation improvement projects. While Phase I funding to Culver City is greatly appreciated, completing the rail line to Santa Monica is a critical link to key activity and employment centers and to addressing Metro's overall regional strategy to enhance region-wide mobility, accommodate increasing travel demands and relieving traffic along the very congested I10 corridor.
2. **The Westside Subway Extension Must be on the List of Projects to be Included in a Half-cent Transportation Sales Tax Measure.** The Westside Subway Extension Project is the one of three WSCCOG priority transportation improvement projects. The Long Range Transportation Plan Financial Forecast Update report, dated August 3, 2007, rated the proposed Metro Red Line subway extension to Century City as a highly performing countywide transit project. A subway route through Beverly Hills, West Hollywood and West Los Angeles to Santa Monica will help mitigate traffic congestion on local streets, and provide significant transportation improvements for the County to a corridor with high employment and residential densities.

3. **The I-10/Robertson/National Area Circulation Improvement Project Must be On the List of Projects to be Included in a Half-cent Transportation Sales Tax Measure.** The I-10/Robertson/National Area Circulation Improvement Project is the one of three WSCCOG priority transportation improvement projects. This project will improve the bottleneck traffic on I-10 and around the future Exposition Light Rail Transit station area by reconfiguring the on/off ramp system and streets to rationalize traffic movements.
  
4. **The Metro Green Line Extension to LAX Must be on the List of Projects to be Included In a Half-cent Transportation Sales Tax Measure.** While the WSCCOG has not taken a formal position on the Green Line extension to LAX project to date, it has been agreed that it is worthwhile to add the project list for any transportation sales tax measure. As proposed, the two-mile extension of the Green Line to Lot C will link the airport and the LAX employment center into the regional rail network. This light rail line will help mitigate traffic congestion in the LAX area and will relieve traffic along the congested 405 and 105 corridors.

In addition, as you know, the WSCCOG has also submitted comments on the draft Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update. Since this COG has made a point of prioritizing the region's most significant transportation enhancements, you will note that our comments relating to the sales tax coincide with those shared with you on the LRTP update.

More significantly, however, we are aware of an effort by the San Gabriel Valley region to convince the Metro Board to place the extension the Metro Gold Line into the baseline or constrained part of the LRTP. We are gravely concerned that a Board decision to do so will jeopardize future federal funding for Phase II of the Expo Light Rail Line. To our knowledge, it will be extremely difficult for two projects in the Los Angeles County area to simultaneously receive federal approval and subsequent funding.

The WSCCOG has never opposed the extension of the Metro Gold Line and continues to support completing our countywide rail system in an equitable manner based upon the clear and objective criteria developed in the LRTP. That criterion clearly identifies the Expo LRT as a superior rail line that will serve to move people out of their cars onto transit in much greater numbers than anticipated by the Gold Line extension to Azusa, or even, Ontario. We do not support the "leap frogging" of the Gold Line extension, despite their professionally organized public relations campaign, over the Expo LRT Phase II line. We would, instead, urge our counterparts in San Gabriel Valley to: 1) support local county-wide efforts to increase funding for transit; 2) look to alternative funding, such as an assessment, for the local match funding; and/or, 3) work with Metro to encourage the Federal Transit Administration to adopt a new way of allocating transit funding which provides for a system-wide approach, especially for urban areas, rather than piecemeal appropriations.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these recommendations, and in advance, for your support and leadership in ensuring that these Westside projects, with Countywide benefits, are included in the list of projects included in a half-cent transportation sales tax ballot measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda J. Briskman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Linda J. Briskman, Chair  
Westside Cities Council of Governments

cc: Carol Inge, Chief Planning Officer, Metro  
WSSCOG Governing Board  
Claudette Moody, Deputy to Metro Board Chair O'Connor  
Jody Hall Esser, WSSCOG Executive Director