

**Board Report**

File #: 2016-0144, **File Type:** Informational Report**Agenda Number:** 24

**SYSTEM SAFETY, SECURITY AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
APRIL 14, 2016****SUBJECT: FINDINGS OF THE FEBRUARY 2016 PUBLIC HEARINGS****ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE****RECOMMENDATION**RECEIVE AND FILE status report on the **February 2016 Public Hearings**.**ISSUE**

Federal guidelines and MTA policy require that a public hearing be held when major service changes to the bus system are considered. Accordingly, the affected Service Councils conducted a series of public hearings in February 2016, along with a Saturday hearing conducted at the Gateway Headquarters. The purpose of the hearings was to solicit public input, written comments and verbal testimony regarding proposed service changes to 24 bus lines that operate throughout the Metro region. These changes are slated for implementation on June 28, 2016 or later.

A review of public input, an analysis of impacts and staff's service change recommendations, as approved by the Service Councils, are outlined in this report. The Service Councils were requested to consider the possible impacts from these proposals before approval.

DISCUSSION

In compliance with federal public hearing requirements and MTA's administrative code, each Service Council is required to conduct a public hearing and consider public testimony before approving significant modifications to the bus system. As part of this process, each Service Council, respectively, is also required to consider potential impacts these changes may have on the community.

Each year Metro service development staff reviews bus routes to identify opportunities to improve productivity, safety, cost effectiveness, capacity utilization, and service quality. During this round of public hearings, route modifications were proposed to:

- Introduce a new line in East Los Angeles to improve access to USC/LAC General Hospital;
- Modify lines to serve the new Expo Line Sepulveda Station;

- Join lines together which have common terminals; allows for improvements in service frequency and eliminates the need to transfer;
- Reduce duplication with Metro Rail and BRT lines; and
- Discontinue service on lines which may be operated by a municipal operator, allowing for some service hours to be reinvested into other Metro lines.

The official notice of public hearing was finalized after the December 2015 service council meetings and was published in local newspapers beginning January 2016. Due to the systemwide nature of the proposals, public hearings were conducted in February at all five service council meetings, as well as one Saturday meeting held at the Metro Gateway headquarters building.

The published Notice of Public Hearing (**Attachment A**) gives the time, date, and location of each public hearing. Additional notices were subsequently published in other local, regional, and foreign language newspapers system-wide, where appropriate. Approximately 81,000 marketing take-ones were distributed on buses, trains, and at customer service outlets informing riders of the proposals under consideration. The Notice of Public Hearing was also posted on Metro's main website, along with a link to maps showing the proposed changes. Patrons could also send responses to Metro via email at servicechanges@metro.net, fax, or mail.

In addition to the public hearings, staff presented the proposed changes to the February meetings of the Metro Citizen's Advisory Committee, General Managers, and Quarterly Transit Providers.

At the public hearings, staff asked attendees to indicate how they heard of the hearings. Of the 180 who signed in at the six meetings, the following data was collected:

Outreach Method	Number of Patrons
Brochure	52
Friend	28
Metro Website	20
Email	17
Facebook	8
The Source Blog	7
Twitter	2

Summary of Public Comment

A total of 180 individuals attended the six public hearings; 118 of those individuals provided verbal testimony; 291 written testimonies were received via letters, facsimiles and emails by Friday, February 12, 2016, the close of the public record.

Of the total testimony received systemwide via all methods, approximately 19% (54 comments) supported the proposals. Nearly 57% (165 comments) opposed, and another 11% (33 comments)

suggested modifications to the service change proposals. Roughly 13% (39) of the comments received were unrelated to the Public Hearing's proposed changes. In addition two petitions were received and are noted separately; Line 190/194 received a petition with 200 signatures and one for Line 460 with 152 signatures, all against the proposals.

The majority of the "opposed" comments received via email and testimony are related to the cancellation of Lines 190/194, 270, and 460. The following summarizes the most popular comments with a response from staff:

Lines 190/194

- 1) If the service is cancelled, there will be no way to travel to jobs, school, doctors, etc. *Metro will only cancel the service if another provider will begin operating the service the very next day.*
- 2) Metro operates later service than the municipal operators and will leave patrons stranded. *As stated in the Board approved Transit Service Policy, a new transit provider will be required to operate the same level of service, span of service, and days of operation for the first year of operation.*
- 3) TAP Cards are not interchangeable between operators. *TAP Cards with "stored value" and with the EZ designation (for local line travel) allows for transfers between all LA County operators with no additional fee charged at the farebox.*
- 4) Metro Bus Operators will lose their jobs. *No Metro employee will lose their job, however, some with lower seniority may, per their union contract, be assigned to a different division. However, at least 50% of the net savings from Lines 190/194 will be reinvested into San Gabriel Valley existing lines with higher demand. These proposals are:*

Line 268 - Extend service into Sierra Madre Station

Line 770 -Improve weekday service - 10" peak/15" base headway

Line 760 - Extend to Artesia Blue Line Station; improve weekday service to 10" peak/15" base headway

Line 762 - Improve headway to 15" peak/30" base headway

Line 270

- 1) Don't cancel the line. *Metro will only cancel the service if another provider will begin operating the service the very next day.*
- 2) If another operator takes over the service, ensure the transition is smooth and organized. *Students would find the same schedule and span of service should the line be transitioned to another Operator. Staff would ensure the "Go Rio" TAP program would remain in place.*
- 3) Do not cut the line in half. *Establishing El Monte Station as the transfer point would have minimal impact as there are relatively few through riding passengers. Staff reviewed the ridership which will be discussed further in this report.*

Line 460

- 1) If the service is cancelled, there will be no way to travel to jobs, school, doctors, etc. *It is proposed to only cancel the portion of the line from Downtown LA to the Norwalk Green Line*

Station. Service is provided by Metro Blue Line, Silver Line and Green Line.

- 2) Due to transfers between the remaining Line 460 and the proposed alternatives, it will cost more money. *Actually, it could cost less money. If a patron starts on Line 460 from Disneyland to Downtown LA, the cost is \$2.50. But, if a patron takes Line 460, transfers to the Green Line to the Metro Blue Line, the cost is only \$1.75 if using a TAP Card. Transfers are free for unlimited transfers up to two hours of travel.*
- 3) The Green Line span of service does not operate as late as Line 460. *Should the line be discontinued, late night trips would still be provided by Line 460 to Downtown Los Angeles.*

Recommendations

The following summarizes by Public Hearing proposal staff's recommendation, as approved by the Service Councils:

Line 16/316 - Downtown Los Angeles - Century City via 3rd St

Proposal - Combine with Line 220 at Cedar Sinai Hospital, providing one continuous line via new branch Line 17.

Service Council Action - Approved as proposed.

Line 51/52/351/352 - Wilshire Ctr - Downtown LA - Compton- Harbor Gateway TC via Avalon

Proposal - Discontinue Limited Stop Line 352 and replace with new Limited Stop Line 351. All existing limited stops on Line 352 will be served by the new Line 351. Line 51 operates more frequently than Line 52; therefore a new Line 351 will benefit more riders with a faster service.

Service Council - Approved as proposed.

Line 68 - Downtown LA - Montebello via Chavez - E. 1st St

Proposal - Replace the 1st St route segment from Indiana Station to East LA College with new Line 106. This new line will also operate to County USC Hospital and replace a large portion of Line 620.

Service Council Action - Approved as proposed.

Line 111/311 - LAX City Bus Center - Norwalk Sta via Florence Av

Proposal - Discontinue Line 311 limited stop service and operate as local service. Service for all patrons would be improved from every 20 minutes to every 10 minutes in the peak periods.

Converting limited stop trips into local trips will double the service for patrons at over 20 stops not served by the limited stop service.

Service Council Action - Approved as proposed.

Line 156 - Panorama City to Hollywood via Highland Av, Vineland Av & Van Nuys Bl

Proposal - Combine with Line 236, Route 237 on Van Nuys Bl at the Orange Line, providing a new continuous line from Hollywood to Granada Hills.

Service Council Action - Approved as proposed.

Line 175 - Silverlake - Hollywood via Hyperion Av - Sunset Bl

Proposal - Remove two underutilized mid-day trips.

Service Council Action - Approved as proposed.

Line 190/194 - El Monte Sta. - Cal Poly Pomona via Ramona Bl & Valley Bl

Proposal - Discontinue service, possibly to be operated by another provider.

Service Council Action - Approved as proposed. Foothill Transit has agreed to operate the same level of service for the next two years, add an additional late night trip on Line 190 and honor all Metro fare media on this line for at least one year on Lines 190/194 and 270.

Line 220 - Beverly Ctr - Culver City Sta via Robertson Bl

Proposal - Replace Line 220 with a branch route of Line 16 at Cedar Sinai Hospital; new branch Line 17 would operate from downtown LA to Culver City Expo Station.

Service Council Action - Approved as proposed.

Line 234 - Sylmar - Westwood via Sepulveda Bl

Proposal - Late night, early morning, Saturday and Sunday extension from Westwood to Sepulveda Expo Line Station, when opened.

Service Council Action - Approved as proposed.

Line 258 - Alhambra - Paramount via Fremont Av & Eastern Av

Proposal - Join line with Line 485 at Cal State LA, providing a continuous line from Paramount to Pasadena. For the first time, residents in Paramount and along Line 258 will have access to Cal State LA.

Service Council Action - Approved as proposed.

Line 270 - Monrovia - Norwalk Sta via Workman Mill - Peck Rds

Proposal - Discontinue service, possibly to be operated by another provider.

Service Council Action - The Gateway Cities Service Council voted to transition the northern portion of the line which operates from El Monte Station to Monrovia to Foothill Transit. They also voted to not transition the southern portion of the line to Norwalk Transit but have it be retained by Metro (contact operator). The staff proposal would have allowed the predominant transit provider in this region to incorporate this portion of Line 270 into their system, possibly adjusting other lines to achieve efficiencies while retaining the Line 270 service with lower fares. Metro would have then reallocated at least half of the net savings in buses and service hours to other lines within the Gateway Cities service area such as Line 266 on Lakewood and Rosemead Bl. and Line 130 on Artesia Bl. This would have expanded transit service within the region.

Line 460 - Downtown LA - Disneyland via Harbor Transitway - I-105 Fwy

Proposal - Discontinue route segment from Downtown LA to Norwalk Green Line Station (replacement service provided by Metro Silver Line, Silver Express, Blue Line, and Green Line).

Service Council Action - Staff recommended maintaining the original proposal to only operate service from Norwalk to Disneyland; however the Gateway Cities Service Council voted to maintain the line as operated today from Downtown Los Angeles to Disneyland.

Line 485 - Downtown LA - Altadena via Fremont - Lake Aves

Proposal - Discontinue service from Downtown LA to Cal State LA. Service north of Cal State LA will be operated to Altadena by an extension of Line 258.

Service Council Action - Approved as proposed. Of the total boardings on Line 485, only approximately 7 ride per bus trip travel from Alhambra to Union Station Those continuing to Union

Station may board frequent Silver Line service (5 minutes in the peaks and 15 minutes in the base periods).

Line 501 - NoHo - Pasadena Express

Proposal - New express service between Metro North Hollywood Red/Orange Line Stations to Metro Del Mar Gold Line Station.

Service Council Action - Approved as proposed.

Line 577 - El Monte Sta - Long Beach VA Medical Center via I-605 Fwy

Proposal - Add three stops between El Monte Station and Rio Hondo College. Exclude Line 577 from the express premium fare policy (requires Board of Directors approval).

Recommendation - Due to the recent passage of Motion 63 (study of an express bus from various Long Beach locations to the Metro Gold Line extension), staff recommends not implementing these proposals until the study is completed and brought back to the Board.

Line 620 - Boyle Heights Shuttle

Proposal - Discontinue service on Cesar E. Chavez, Forest Av, Wabash Av, Evergreen Av, Mott St, and 1st St. Replacement service is provided by the current routes of Lines 30, 68, 71, and 770. The remaining service will operate from the USC Medical Center, State St, 1st St, Boyle Av, Whittier Bl, Soto St, 4th St, Indiana St, then continuing out 1st St along the route of Line 68 to East LA College (see Line 68 above). The new service will be renumbered to Line 106 operating in both directions. Hours and days of operation will remain unchanged.

Service Council Action - Approved as proposed.

Line 704 - Downtown Santa Monica via Santa Monica Bl

Proposal - Make permanent experimental improvement of weekday mid-day service from every 20 minutes to every 15 minutes.

Service Council Action - Approved as proposed.

Line 734 - Sylmar Sta - Westwood via Sepulveda Bl

Proposal - Extend service from Westwood to Sepulveda Expo Line Station, when opened.

Service Council Action - Approved as proposed.

Line 788 - Metro Valley - Westwood Express

Proposal - Extend service from Westwood to Sepulveda Expo Line Station, when opened.

Service Council Action - Approved as proposed.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Board of Directors consideration of the of the service changes presented in this report is included in the FY17 adopted budget. The implementation of these changes would have no negative impact to the agency.

Impact to Budget

With the cancelation of Lines 190/194, and the northern portion of Line 270, and Foothill Transit

assuming those services, Metro will achieve a net saving. At least 50% of the net savings will be reinvested in Metro services (Lines 266, 268, 760, 762, and 770).

Based on the decision of the Gateway Cities Service Council, Metro will retain the southern portion of Line 270, which is contract operated.

The remaining lines and proposed changes listed in this report remain cost neutral.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

No alternatives are presented, as any adjustments made to the original service plans were considered and approved at the Service Council level.

NEXT STEPS

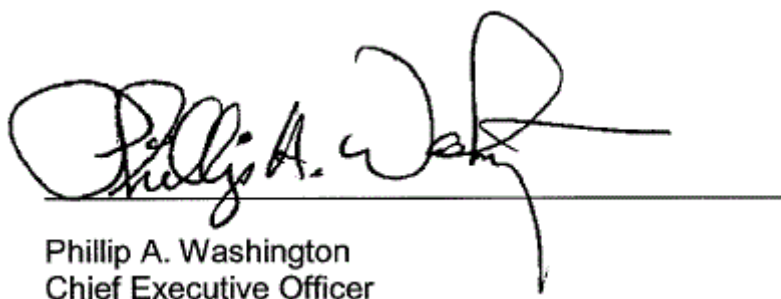
The proposals considered for public hearing and final recommendations as approved by the Service Council's will be implemented with the June 26, 2016 service changes.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Notice of Public Hearing

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