



SGVCOG Transportation Committee Special Meeting Minutes

Date: November 19, 2020
Time: 2:00 PM
Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

1. Call to Order
J. Pu called the meeting to order at 2:00pm.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
J. Pu led the Transportation Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Roll Call
A quorum was in attendance.

Committee Members Present

Claremont	Ed Reece
Diamond Bar	David Liu
Duarte	John Fasana
Glendora	Steven Mateer
Industry	Cory Moss
La Cañada Flintridge	Keith Eich
Monterey Park	Peter Chan
Pomona	Rene Guerrero
San Gabriel	Jason Pu
South El Monte	Gloria Olmos
South Pasadena	Diana Mahmud
Temple City	Ashley Avery
Walnut	Allen Wu
L.A. County District #1	Martin Reyes
L.A. County District #5	David Perry

Absent

Guests

Foothill Transit	Doran Barnes
Foothill Transit	Yoko Igawa
Metro	Martha Butler
Metro	Gary Byrne
Metro	Tito Corona
Metro	Lilian De Loza-Gutierrez
Metro	Mary Lou Echternach
Metro	David Lor

SGVCOG Staff

M. Creter, Executive Director
M. Christoffels, Staff
P. Hubler, Staff
A. Fung, Staff

4. Public Comment
A total of seven written comments were submitted and the comments can be found in Attachment A towards the end of this document.

5. Changes to Agenda Order
There were no changes to the agenda.

CONSENT CALENDAR

6. Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes – 10/15/2020
Action: Review and approve.

There was a motion to approve consent calendar item 6. (M/S: J. Fasana/P. Chan)
[Motion Passed]

AYES:	Claremont, Diamond Bar, Duarte, Glendora, Industry, La Cañada Flintridge, Monterey Park, Pomona, San Gabriel, South El Monte, South Pasadena, Temple City, Walnut, L.A. County District #1, L.A. County District #5
NOES:	
ABSTAIN:	
NO VOTE RECORDED:	
ABSENT:	

PRESENTATIONS

7. San Gabriel Valley Transit Feasibility Study
SGVCOG Chief Engineer, Mark Christoffels, provided a presentation on this item. The San Gabriel Valley Transit Feasibility Study was initiated after it was determined by Metro that the SR-60 Gold Line alignment was not a feasible alternative for the potential eastward extension. The Metro Board of Directors subsequently directed Metro staff to provide funding and work with SGVCOG staff to undertake a study to identify alternative transit solutions to solve the mobility needs within the San Gabriel Valley, approving \$1.5 million in its FY 2021 budget for this study.

Key Questions/Discussions:

- A committee member inquired the scope and goals of the San Gabriel Valley Transit Feasibility Study. Mr. Christoffels responded that the Study aims to identify the communities that are not currently well-served by the Foothill Gold Line and Metrolink and examine existing general plans to forecast future transportation needs based on potential developments and population growth.
- Another committee member inquired about sources that are providing funds to conduct the Study. Mr. Christoffels responded that Metro included \$1.5 million within its budget to conduct the Study and the funds are now available to the SGVCOG through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Metro. The \$1.5 million is part of the funds that were originally allocated for the Gold Line Project that would extend the Atlantic Station from East Los Angeles to South El Monte.
- A committee member inquired about whether the Study would include opportunities for cities to provide inputs and suggestions. Mr. Christoffels

responded that cities and communities will be given the opportunity to participate and comment throughout the Study's development.

- A committee member inquired about whether the Study would incorporate first/last mile connections and Metro's Metro Micro pilot program. Mr. Christoffels responded that the consultants will likely produce dozens of potential alternatives based on our region's needs and a scoring system will be developed to rank the proposed alternatives. The scoring system would likely include first/last mile connections.
- A committee member inquired about whether funds will be available to implement recommendations from the Study. Mr. Christoffels responded that \$635 million will be made available to implement the Study's recommendations. The funds were originally allocated for the project to extend the Gold Line from the Atlantic Station in East Los Angeles to South El Monte.
- A committee member inquired whether the Study's Request-for-Proposals (RFP) would be available. Mr. Christoffels responded that the RFP will be posted on the SGVCOG website very soon.

8. Foothill Transit Overview

Foothill Transit Chief Executive Officer, Doran Barnes, provided a presentation on this item. Foothill Transit was the first public transit agency in the United States to deploy three fast-charge, all-electric buses in 2010, which was expanded to include 12 additional fast-charge buses in 2014. This enabled the Agency to operate the first all-electric, fast-charge bus line in the nation. In the near future, double-decker electric buses will be deployed into express services on the I-10 Corridor, which will significantly increase capacity along the heavily congested corridor and bring highly-visible innovative zero-emissions transit vehicles to the Greater Los Angeles region.

Key Questions/Discussions:

- Several committee members applauded Foothill Transit for making public transportation more accessible and more eco-friendly.
- A committee member commented that it would be crucial to collaborate with Foothill Transit during the development of the San Gabriel Valley Transit Feasibility Study to ensure regional inter-connectivity.
- Another committee member inquired about whether Foothill Transit plans on implementing non-stop service routes between the eastside of the San Gabriel Valley and Pasadena and Long Beach areas. Mr. Barnes responded that Foothill Transit is in the process of conducting a 2-Year Comprehensive Operational Analysis to examine modifying the existing service routes. The Analysis will also explore the possibility of implementing additional non-stop services.
- A committee member inquired about the cost-effectiveness of zero-emission buses. Mr. Barnes responded that Foothill Transit is still learning about the zero-emission technology and that electric buses tend to result in lower maintenance expenses and higher fuel expenses. Foothill Transit staff is currently working to optimize the financial model of running an electric bus fleet.

9. Metro North Hollywood-Pasadena Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project
Metro Deputy Project Manager, Gary Byrne, provided a presentation on this item. The project includes a corridor route that will serve as a key regional connection between the San Fernando and San Gabriel Valleys with connections to the Metro B (Red), G (Orange), and L (Gold) Lines. Metro conducted the North Hollywood-to-Pasadena BRT Corridor Technical Study in 2017 and initiated the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project in 2019 to study various route options to connect the North Hollywood Metro Station to Pasadena City College. The Draft EIR is available for public review and comment until December 10, 2020.

DISCUSSION ITEM

10. Metro Measure R Highway Program Criteria and Measure M Guidelines
SGVCOG Chief Engineer, Mark Christoffels, provided a presentation on this item. Metro recently directed Metro staff to circulate recommendations to modernize the Metro Highway Program, including broadening its mission, expanding funding eligibility, recommitting to the previously adopted Metro Complete Streets Policy, and updating performance metrics. As a result, Metro staff are requesting councils of governments and regional partners to review and provide feedback on the Measure R Highway Program Criteria and Measure M Guidelines by Monday, December 7, 2020.

Key Questions/Discussions:

- Several committee members expressed support for Metro’s proposed changes to the guidelines given that the changes provide additional flexibility for subregions.
- A committee member inquired about whether the proposed changes would open additional funds for San Gabriel Valley cities to implement projects. Mr. Christoffels responded that it is possible that individual jurisdictions would find themselves with individual supplying of bikeway-related projects under the Metro Highway Program.

There was a motion made to support the proposed changes to the Metro Measure R Highway Program Criteria and Measure M Guidelines with the condition that the changes do not adversely affect scheduled project delivery for projects in the subregions. (M/S: J. Fasana/E. Reece)

[Motion Passed]

AYES:	Claremont, Diamond Bar, Duarte, Glendora, Industry, La Cañada Flintridge, Monterey Park, Pomona, San Gabriel, South El Monte, South Pasadena, Walnut, L.A. County District #1, L.A. County District #5
NOES:	
ABSTAIN:	
NO VOTE	Temple City
RECORDED:	
ABSENT:	

11. Oral Report

Metro Board Director, John Fasana, announced that a new bus plaza recently opened at Union Station on November 1, 2020.

LIAISON REPORTS

No verbal report was given unless otherwise noted.

12. Metrolink Report

13. Gold Line Report

14. Foothill Transit Report

A verbal report was provided.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

15. Oral Report

SGVCOG Executive Director, Marisa Creter, reported that the California Transportation Commission has recommended \$217.9 million from the Senate Bill 1 state fuel tax program to support the 57/60 Confluence Project. Additionally, the new SGVCOG Director of Capital Projects will be starting on December 7, 2020.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members of the Transportation Committee expressed their appreciation to Duarte City Councilmember, John Fasana, and SGVCOG Chief Engineer, Mark Christoffels, for their dedication to serve the San Gabriel Valley.

ADJOURN

J. Pu adjourned the Transportation Committee meeting at 3:51pm.

**San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
Transportation Committee Meeting – Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 2:00pm
Written Public Comments**

Public Comment #1: Jennifer Nutting

Submitted: Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 7:49 AM

Good Morning,

I'm writing in support of L.A. Metro's proposal to modernize the use of highway funds to include active transportation.

As a 49 year old woman, who owns two cars, I often take my bicycle for my 8 mile commute from Pasadena to downtown, and would do it more often if I felt safe on the roads. Increasingly, I am joined by more and more cyclists.

I only bike if I can get on the road before 6AM, otherwise the conditions are too dangerous. As it is I take my bike on the metro through the most precarious stretch in the afternoons, purely for safety reasons, yet I should be able to take a river path as in many other cities world wide.

As a teacher in Downtown L.A. many of my students bike or walk to school. They are routinely hit or put in unnecessary danger. They do not have the choice of taking a vehicle.

I come from a very cold place on the east coast. Yet Boston has an active transportation network in place, making it possible for many to get around car free.

Please seriously consider Metro's proposal to use highway funds for active transportation, and bring southern California's transportation network up to par with the rest of the first world.

Jennifer Nutting
Secondary Language Arts LAUSD
323-868-4802

Public Comment #2: Andy Au

Submitted: Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 8:05 AM

Metro's role is to develop multimodal transportation facilities that meet the needs of all community members. Metro's goal should be to improve transportation infrastructure that increases accessibility to safe and sustainable travel. Promote safe, sustainable, and equitable transportation for all communities.

Growing access to active transportation also serves to increase access to economic development opportunities, educational attainment, and greater community engagement

Adding more lanes doesn't reduce traffic. The outcome of roadway widening and expansion is well-documented and acknowledged in the academic world. In 2017 the Governor's Office of

Planning and Research advised agencies that “each percent increase in lane miles results in a 1.03 percent increase in vehicle travel” (Source: pg. 29 – [http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20180416-743 Technical Advisory 4.16.18.pdf](http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20180416-743_Technical_Advisory_4.16.18.pdf)). Even Caltrans has acknowledged this fact.

Allow cities more flexibility in how they utilize funds for multimodal transportation (i.e. complete street projects) — make the program more flexible.

The funds will remain with and be spent at the discretion of sub-regions. This will allow for greater flexibility so that projects that provide alternatives to vehicular transportation can also be funded.

Vehicular transportation is the main source of air pollution in southern California, which is one of the most polluted regions in the United States. Disadvantaged communities bear a disproportionate burden of air pollution from vehicular trips. Vehicular transportation (commercial and individual vehicles) account for over half of greenhouse gas emissions in California.

It is critical that future investments help reduce vehicular dependence if we want to reach California’s climate goals. We must work toward mitigating the worst impacts of climate change and contribute to a safer and more sustainable future.

Thank you,

Andy Au
323-344-8795 home / office

Public Comment #3: Wesley Ruetimann (On behalf of ActiveSGV)
Submitted: Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 8:46 AM

Please see attached letter.

Public Comment #4: Marc Weiss
Submitted: Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 10:11 AM

I want to share with you my thoughts about Metro’s proposal to update transportation planning and projects. It is my understanding that Metro’s role is to meet the needs of the community through improved transportation infrastructure. The goal is to improve accessibility, safety, and sustainability for all communities and individuals within those communities, not just drivers. Increased access and safety serves the community in part by improving community members’ ability to get to and from work, education, and other community resources. I’d also note that virtually all academic studies show that trying to decrease traffic by widening roads and adding lanes does not work; a more effective strategy is to expand opportunities for alternative transportation that doesn’t require driving. Plus, Metro’s proposal would give localities more flexibility to develop and fund transportation programs that best suit their community, rather than trying to apply a one-size-fits all approach.

Finally, moving to alternatives to automobile transportation is a necessary step in addressing our current climate crisis - including our long-standing air quality challenges. Cars and trucks contribute more than half of all greenhouse gas emissions in California.

Thank you for considering these thoughts when you think about Metro's proposals specifically, and solving our transportation challenges generally.

Marc Weiss

weiss.m.a@icloud.com

818-269-1133

80 N. Raymond Ave. #207

Pasadena, CA 91103

Public Comment #5: Eli Lipmen

Submitted: Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 10:35 AM

Move LA was intimately involved in developing the funding formulas for Measure R and Measure M, working with our broad coalition and COGs to ensure these measures included clear and discernable funding categories so that Angelenos can enjoy the benefits of public transit and our transportation system for decades to come. The language that voters approved for both measures included mechanisms for future revisions to meet the changing needs of our region as our communities, technologies, and funding change. This flexibility is consistent with voters' expectations that their tax dollars ensure a transportation system that remains resilient, reliable, and adaptable.

The Modernizing Metro Highways Motion, which was supported by and developed with the input of Metro Director John Fasana, is consistent with what voters' approved by allowing priorities like Metro's Complete Streets Policy, Active Transportation Strategic Plan, and First/Last Mile Strategic Plan to work more synchronously with planned highway and local streets projects in each sub-region. The passage of this motion will result in better infrastructure and more flexibility for San Gabriel Valley cities that gets people out of their cars into alternative modes of transportation. For these reasons, we ask that you support this Motion and encourage the Metro Board to pass it.

Eli Lipmen

Preferred Pronouns: *he/him/his*

Director of Programming and Development

MoveLA.org | [@MoveLATransit](https://twitter.com/MoveLATransit) | c: 310-985-5684

Public Comment #6: Michelle Anderson

Submitted: Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 12:28 PM

Dear SGVCOG Transportation Committee:

I ask you to support Metro's proposal to open funding available for the highway program to be used by local jurisdictions for active transportation projects.

Metro's role is to develop multimodal transportation facilities that meet the needs of all community members. Metro's goal should be to improve transportation infrastructure that increases accessibility to safe and sustainable travel.

Boost active transportation and you also boost the region's economy, education, and sense of community. Growing access to active transportation also serves to increase access to economic development opportunities, educational attainment, and greater community engagement.

Adding lanes doesn't reduce traffic. The outcome of roadway widening and expansion is well-documented and acknowledged in the academic world. Even Caltrans has acknowledged this fact.

Please allow cities more flexibility in how they utilize funds for multimodal transportation (i.e. complete street projects) — make the program more flexible. The funds will remain with and be spent at the discretion of sub-regions. This will allow for greater flexibility so that projects that provide alternatives to vehicular transportation can also be funded.

Act to achieve our climate and social justice goals: Vehicular transportation is the main source of air pollution in southern California, which is one of the most polluted regions in the United States. Vehicular transportation (commercial and individual vehicles) account for over half of greenhouse gas emissions in California. Disadvantaged communities bear a disproportionate burden of air pollution from vehicular trips.

Thank you.

Michelle Anderson
Resident and multimodal transportation user
Pasadena

Public Comment #7: Michael Seigel
Submitted: Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 12:37 PM

Dear Board and Committee Members,

I support the effort to modernize the Highway Program. It is clear that we need better a multimodal network to help us stave off congestion as well as environmental and health issues. Allowing cities the flexibility they need to use the funds in the best interests of their neighborhoods will bring about better transportation options for the Greater Los Angeles area as a whole.

Please support the motion and help LA get into the 21st Century. Thank you!

November 17, 2019

San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
Transportation Committee
11/19/20 Teleconference MEeting

ADVISORY BOARD

Vincent Chang, Esq.

David Diaz

Rafael Gonzalez

Yvette Martinez

Stephanie Ramirez

Wesley Reutimann

Chris Tran

RE: Agenda Item #10 - Metro Measure R Highway Program Criteria and Measure M Guidelines

Dear Transportation Committee Members,

On behalf of our members and team at Active San Gabriel Valley (ActiveSGV), I am submitting the following comments, which are informed by our experience working with local communities and stakeholders on Metro-funded projects, as well as our active support for the passage of Measure M. We recognize and applaud the SGVCOG for its leadership in planning for a diverse, resilient transportation network in the San Gabriel Valley. We hope you will consider the following when developing formal comments to Metro regarding the proposed updates to Measures R and M:

1) Measure R and M Highway Funding is used for projects on Local Streets -- not just “Highways”. The most recent and significant example of this in the San Gabriel Valley is the ongoing reallocation of almost \$1 billion in Measure R Highway funding for local improvements along the 710-N corridor. In 2018 Metro invited corridor cities to request funding for local Transportation Demand and System Management Projects. In 2019 Metro Highways Department awarded over \$300 million in funding to SGVCOG cities, including the communities of Monterey Park, San Marino, South Pasadena, San Gabriel, and Rosemead.

2) When Metro Highway Funding is used on local streets, it impacts all roadway users, including older adults, children, and mobility-impaired residents who walk along and across streets to access local schools, community sites, and businesses. Transportation “improvements” should not make local streets more difficult or dangerous to cross by foot. This is particularly important in Los Angeles County, where traffic crashes are the number one cause of premature death for children aged 5-14, and number two cause for children 1-4, young adults 15-24, and adults 25-44.¹

As part of the ongoing 710-N reallocation process, Metro Highways staff has not permitted San Gabriel Valley cities to utilize funding for pedestrian safety, transit, and multi-modal projects, despite corridor cities requesting over \$200 million in such projects.

¹Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Mortality in Los Angeles County.
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/dca/data/documents/mortalityrpt12.pdf>

3) Vehicle trips are the main source of air pollution in southern California, one of the most polluted regions in the United States. The outcomes of our poor air quality are devastating, especially to inland communities like those in the San Gabriel Valley. High rates of asthma and other respiratory illnesses, as well as cognitive impairments, some cancers, and even obesity have all been linked to exposure to high levels of air pollution. Most recently, researchers at Harvard discovered that [risk of dying from COVID-19 goes up 8% for each increase of 1 µg/m³ of PM_{2.5}](#).² The cost of these health disparities -- particularly long-term, chronic illnesses such as asthma -- is billions in associated healthcare and diminished productivity to LA County.

4) California will never meet its climate action goals unless we reduce how much we drive. Individual and commercial vehicles are responsible for over 50% of all greenhouse gas emissions in the state of California when one accounts for emissions related to the extraction, processing, and distribution of oil. Vehicle electrification alone will not be sufficient to meet our goals, according to the CA Air Resources Board.³ As a result it is absolutely critical that future investments help reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) per capita, do our part to mitigate the worst impacts of climate change, and help lead our state towards a more sustainable economy and future. Metro Highway Funding can and should support our commitment to cleaner air and healthier communities.

5) You know that adding more lanes doesn't reduce traffic, and can even attract more. The outcome of roadway widening and expansion is well-documented and acknowledged in the academic world. In 2017 the Governor's Office of Planning and Research advised agencies that "[each percent increase in lane miles results in a 1.03 percent increase in vehicle travel](#)".⁴ Even Caltrans has acknowledged this fact.⁵

6) LA County voters overwhelmingly support pedestrian and safety projects. In Spring 2016, polling of voters prior to the passage of Measure M found greater support for repairing sidewalks than any other local improvement. Specifically:

- 83% favored using funds from the measure to make it easier and safer for children to walk or bike to schools.
- 81% favored using ballot measure funds to improve crosswalks so they are safer for pedestrians.
- 74% favor using ballot measure funds for fixing sidewalks, including more street trees, benches, wider sidewalks, lighting, and more separation from cars.
- 65% favored spending the sales tax funds on "expanding freeway lanes."

[A countywide field survey in 2013 by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health](#) found similar levels of support among the public, with 89% in favor of more transit

² Source: Fine particulate matter and COVID-19 mortality in the United States A national study on long-term exposure to air pollution and COVID-19 mortality in the United States.

<https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/covid-pm>

³ CA Air Resources Board. "2018 Progress Report - California's Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act." Page 28. <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/tracking-progress>

⁴ State of California Office of Planning and Research. Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts on CEQA. April 2018. pg. 29 - http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20180416-743_Technical_Advisory_4.16.18.pdf

⁵ Streetsblog California. "Caltrans Admits Building Roads Induces More Driving, But Admitting a Problem Is Just the First Step" <https://cal.streetsblog.org/2015/11/18/caltrans-admits-building-roads-induces-congestion-but-admitting-a-problem-is-just-the-first-step/>

service for the elderly and disabled, 88% in favor of installing new and repairing existing sidewalks, 86% providing free transit passes to students, 85% expanding local transit service, and 83% increasing the availability of crosswalks and street lighting.⁶

Public understanding, awareness, and support for measures to improve air quality and take local climate action have only grown since Measure R and M passed.

The proposed revisions will ensure these measures are better aligned with the will of the voters.

7) Measures R and M have mechanisms to allow for updates on a semi-regular basis, recognizing that future community mobility and related needs would change. The language that voters approved for both measures was as clear in its modal allocations as it was on the potential for future revisions to meet the changing needs of our region, particularly in light of Measure M's over fifty year timeline for implementation. To that end, its authors included, and the voters approved, mechanisms that enable today's Modernizing Metro Highways proposal. The voters are not being misled by these proposed revisions; rather, they are consistent with voters' expectations that their tax dollars ensure a transportation system that remains resilient, reliable, and adaptable.

8) The proposed update would not limit the use of Highway Funding for highway projects, but would instead clarify that when Highway funding is used on local streets, projects *can* incorporate multi-modal improvements -- not that they *must*.

We appreciate concerns that funds previously limited to "highway" projects, strictly defined, could be used for projects not directly related to "highway" improvements, but to the benefit of the transportation network generally; and that the current guidelines were hard won. We also recognize, as you do, the value of improving mobility for all users, and the important leadership role that SGVCOG continues to play here and county-wide. We urge you to continue to lead by supporting the letter and spirit of the draft Modernizing Metro Highways proposal.



David Diaz
Executive Director

⁶ Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. "Active Transportation and the Built Environment"
<https://investinginplace.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/dph-activetransbuiltenvironment.pdf>