

**Motion by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
September 23, 2010**

**Grade Crossing Safety Policy**

The MTA Grade Crossing Policy for Light Rail Transit (the "Grade Crossing Policy") was adopted by the Metro Board of Directors on December 4, 2003. The Policy was created to guide the evaluation of alternative grade crossing designs, and possible grade separation alternatives, where proposed light rail alignments cross major streets.

The Grade Crossing Policy was applied on the Exposition Line and the Pasadena Gold Line. In both instances, it engendered substantial controversy, and has been subject to review and, in some cases, reversal by the Public Utility Commission of the State of California. These controversies and reviews, in turn, have sometimes resulted in significant project delays and cost increases. Communities affected by the Policy continue to express concerns about the impacts of grade crossing decisions on public safety, local schools and potential economic development.

At the same time, the current Grade Crossing Policy incorporates many Industry-Standard and fully appropriate technical reviews, including Influence Zone Queue and Crossing Spillback Queue at Grade analyses. These technical calculations provide a methodical process for analyzing the traffic flow impacts of grade separation alternatives. As such, they form an important part of the grade crossing evaluation process. They do not, however, sufficiently address community concerns about non-traffic issues.

Accordingly, it is appropriate that Metro periodically review the Grade Crossing Policy and make adjustments in response to community concerns and "lessons learned" from recent experience.

**I THEREFORE MOVE**, that the Metro Grade Crossing Policy for Light Rail Transit be revised as follows:

1. The name of the Policy shall be changed from “MTA Grade Crossing Policy for Light Rail Transit” to “Metro Grade Crossing Safety Policy.”
2. The preamble to the Policy shall be revised to place greater emphasis on public safety and economic development concerns.
3. Traffic flow analyses of grade crossing alternatives shall be calculated under three scenarios: 1) current automobile traffic levels, 2) traffic levels adjusted to reflect “natural growth” in traffic over 20 years, and 3) traffic levels adjusted to reflect the full build-out of land development entitlements within a one half mile radius of each crossing over 20 years. These three scenarios will estimate impacts on traffic levels that might result from different levels of economic development, and will ensure that grade crossing decisions will accommodate, rather than thwart, future economic development.
4. Analyses of grade crossing alternatives shall include thorough consideration of non-traffic and non-rail issues affecting each crossing. These analyses shall be in narrative form, with special attention to schools, parks and social service facilities, areas of high pedestrian activity and anticipated changes in land use or demographics. These analyses will allow for community input, and for the evaluation of subjective community considerations, such as safety and economic development, which do not lend themselves easily to quantitative analysis.
5. Final determination of each grade crossing or grade separation decision shall be made by the Metro Board of Directors, based on a balanced evaluation of technical considerations, such as traffic flow and queuing, and community-based considerations, such as public safety and economic development.