

**Metro**Los Angeles County  
Metropolitan Transportation AuthorityOne Gateway Plaza  
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952213.922.2000 Tel  
metro.net**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE  
JANUARY 16, 2013****SUBJECT: AIRPORT METRO CONNECTOR****ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE****RECOMMENDATION**

Receive and file:

- A. this report responding to the October 25, 2012 Board Motion directing staff to provide a report on accelerating the Airport Metro Connector project (Project) including a detailed action plan and recommended advocacy efforts; and
- B. the letter by Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) that identifies three general areas (Crenshaw/LAX Line Aviation/Century Station, eastern edge of the Central Terminal Area or the LAWA proposed Intermodal Transportation Facility) for a potential connection between our light rail system and LAWA's proposed Automated People Mover (APM) system (Attachment A).

**ISSUE**

On October 25, 2012, the Board approved a motion by Director Knabe directing the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to report back in January 2013 on what it would take to accelerate the Project so that revenue operations would begin in 2020. The motion also requested a detailed action plan and advocacy efforts for coordinating with Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and other relevant agencies to streamline the environmental process and identify funding.

At a meeting held in early December 2012, LAWA identified three general areas for a potential connection between our light rail system and their proposed APM: (1) at the future Aviation/Century station; (2) at the eastern edge of the Central Terminal Area (either at the site of their existing Administration Building or adjacent to Concourse 0 (east of Terminal 1)); or (3) or at an intermediate location near their proposed Intermodal Transportation Facility (ITF). Attachment B provides a map of the airport area with the three general connection locations.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Background**

The 2009 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) reserves \$200 million (2008\$) in Measure R funds for the Project with a Revenue Operations Date of 2028. The implementation date ranges from 2015 to 2028 with the project schedule to be determined based in part upon a potential LAWA contribution and/or funding, which will be addressed as part of ongoing discussions with them.

In April 2012, the Board received the Alternatives Analysis Report for the Project, including the alternatives recommended for further evaluation in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report (Draft EIS/R). Following the Board meeting, discussions with FAA, FTA and LAWA revealed that FAA was unable to initiate the federal environmental review process (EIS), as originally planned, until LAWA completed its evaluation of its Specific Plan Amendment Study (SPAS). Since any transit connection to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) involves the potential use of airport property, FAA is likely to play a major role in the federal environmental process. The Board was notified of this delay in a July 20, 2012 memorandum. In October 2012, the Board received a report that the Project could not be completed by 2018 in conjunction with the Crenshaw/LAX project due to the current SPAS approval process and the resultant delay in starting the Metro EIS/R. Also in this report, the Board was made aware that any accelerated schedule for the Project relied on actions by both LAWA and FAA. Currently, in cooperation with LAWA staff, we are coordinating with the Crenshaw/LAX project team to ensure that this project accommodates future connections to LAX and are also conducting the technical analyses necessary to support the Airport Metro Connector's environmental review process so that delays can be minimized as much as possible.

### **Specific Plan Amendment Study (SPAS)**

In 2010, LAWA initiated the state environmental review process of their SPAS, which evaluates and updates the status of several elements within their Master Plan. The Draft EIR was released for public review in July 2012 and the comment period closed in October 2012. The Draft EIR can be found at [www.laxspas.org](http://www.laxspas.org).

At the December 3, 2012 Board of Airport Commissioners (BOAC) meeting, LAWA staff informed the BOAC that their Staff Recommended Alternative for the SPAS program included an Automated People Mover (APM) system that would connect the terminal facilities with their off-airport facilities, including an Intermodal Transportation Facility in the vicinity of Parking Lot C and a Consolidated Rental Car Facility at Manchester Square (Aviation/Century Boulevards). The BOAC is currently scheduled to take action on the Staff Recommended Alternative in early Winter 2013, with the Final EIR scheduled for completion this summer.

## Technical Coordination with LAWA

Over the past several months, we have held working meetings with LAWA staff to analyze and understand in greater detail the potential LAWA APM alternatives and the physical constraints and capital costs associated with the light rail alternatives advanced from our Alternatives Analysis study. We anticipate completing our technical work in April 2013 on the locations jointly identified by LAWA and Metro. Depending upon this analysis, all or a subset of the locations could be advanced to the draft environmental document following completion of the SPAS process and approval by FAA.

## Airport Metro Connector Project Strategy

Implementation of a project typically requires two key elements before entering construction. First, an environmental review process is undertaken to explore alternatives and evaluate environmental impacts in a public forum to support local decision-making. Second, a funding plan for the project is developed with appropriate commitments of financial support. The EIS/R, including the Financial Plan, is expected to take 12-18 months to complete, with construction requiring another five (5) years. To deliver the Project by 2020, the environmental review process must begin this summer and adequate non-Metro funds and/or a LAWA contribution must be available for construction following certification of the EIS/R. Discussions with LAWA on funding issues will continue.

## *Environmental Process*

Based on FAA feedback, the start of the federal environmental process for the Airport Metro Connector is contingent upon: (1) The City of Los Angeles approving the EIR for SPAS; and (2) LAWA notifying the FAA that they are prepared to start the environmental clearance process for the transportation improvement(s), either as a next step for LAWA following the SPAS EIR or in partnership with us.

With FAA concurrence to start the environmental clearance process this summer, the Draft EIS/R document could be released in early 2014 with the Final EIS/R completed that same year. We will work with LAWA staff to determine their role during preparation of the EIS/R.

## *Project Funding*

During the course of the Draft EIS/R, a preliminary funding plan will need to be developed to ultimately construct and operate the preferred transit alternative. With preliminary capital cost estimates for the light rail transit alternatives ranging between \$540 million to \$1.2 billion (2010\$), the \$200 million (2008\$) identified in the LRTP will only partially fund the transit options under consideration. In addition, with the loss of Measure J, MTA funding to support construction of this Project is not programmed until fiscal years 2023 to 2028. Given this constraint, development of a financial plan for the EIS/R will rely primarily on LAWA funding or other sources eligible for near-term

implementation. Staff is evaluating other options to accelerate funding. Without the necessary funding commitments and clear implementation schedule, we do not expect the FAA or FTA to approve the Final EIS/R and allow the Project to begin construction.

In a separate action, the Board is being requested to authorize the CEO to evaluate the suitability of a transit and/or highway facility through the Sepulveda Pass Corridor as a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) delivery project. In conjunction with this request, the Board asked staff to consider the connection to LAX as a component of the PPP facility.

As directed by the Board in December 2012, a PPP evaluation of the Airport Metro Connector will be conducted to determine the feasibility of utilizing PPP techniques for all or part of the Airport Metro Connector Project. Those project elements which meet MTA and LAWA objectives, while generating sufficient revenue to be attractive to a private operator, will be recommended for consideration as a component of the PPP multimodal facility. Depending on the analyses, certain segments of the PPP facility could be implemented in phases or as part of one large concession. The preliminary results of this analysis will be reported to the Board in March 2013.

#### *Recommended Advocacy Efforts*

Our advocacy efforts are centered on the two major elements of the project strategy: (1) initiation and streamlining of the environmental process; (2) identification and commitment of funding to support project delivery. For the environmental process, our local, state and federal representatives must first strongly support LAWA's initiation of the project-level EIS/R for its ground transportation element(s) approved in the SPAS. As the project proceeds into environmental review, advocacy is necessary at both the State and Federal levels to elevate the importance of this project. In partnership with LAWA, we will work closely to gain support from our state and federal representatives to ensure that this Project is given the necessary prioritization by FAA and FTA. As the "We Can't Wait" initiative has proven, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) can require enhanced coordination and action by Federal agencies to streamline the multiple permit and review processes required to deliver a project on an accelerated schedule.

In order to secure federal transportation funds to accelerate the construction of the Project, our agency would partner with LAWA to identify and pursue appropriate sources of funds. This effort would include, but not be limited to, seeking formula and grant funds from both the FTA and the FAA. These funds may include Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grant program funds and/or other surface transportation programs authorized in the recently enacted Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21) legislation. The use of airport-specific programs such as Passenger Facility Charges or Customer Facility Charges requires sponsorship by the airport authority and a determination by the FAA that the proposed project is eligible under the restrictive requirements governing airport-related funding. (Projects are eligible only to the extent that they support the capacity, safety, or security of the airport). Therefore, our agency would work in close partnership with LAWA, FAA, senior officials at the USDOT and our state and federal representatives to expedite

confirmation of eligible funding sources and secure the funding necessary to keep the project moving on an accelerated schedule.

### **NEXT STEPS**

We will continue to work with LAWA to define a mutually acceptable Project so that the environmental process can begin this summer with FAA approval. Further, we will continue our discussions with FAA and FTA on the Project to ensure the earliest environmental start date as possible as well as our discussions with LAWA on funding and a project schedule. We will work to identify and execute any necessary agreements between us, LAWA and our two federal partner agencies.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

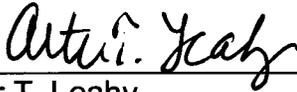
- A. LAWA Letter
- B. Map of Potential Transit Connection Locations

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Martha Welborne, FAIA  
Executive Director, Countywide Planning



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Arthur T. Leahy  
Chief Executive Officer



*Los Angeles  
World Airports*

ATTACHMENT A

December 13, 2012

Mr. Arthur T. Leahy  
Chief Executive Officer  
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority/Metro  
One Gateway Plaza  
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

LAX

LA/Ontario

Van Nuys

City of Los Angeles

Antonio R. Villaraigosa  
Mayor

Board of Airport  
Commissioners

Michael A. Lawson  
President

Valeria C. Velasco  
Vice President

Joseph A. Aredas  
Robert D. Beyer  
Boyd Hight  
Ann M. Hollister  
Fernando M. Torres-Gil

Gina Marie Lindsey  
Executive Director

Dear Mr. Leahy:

Los Angeles World Airport's (LAWA) is committed to continuing to work collaboratively with Metro to identify and define a superior connection between the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and the Metro Rail System.

As part of a major multi-year modernization program underway at LAX, LAWA is working to improve the safety, security, convenience, and quality of service to LAX passengers. Recently, LAWA announced a staff recommended alternative for the Specific Plan Amendment Study (SPAS), which evaluates options at a programmatic level for the North Airfield configuration and a long range plan for ground transportation access at LAX. As part of SPAS staff recommended alternative, LAWA proposes to develop new ground transportation facilities east of Sepulveda Boulevard, including an intermodal transportation facility (ITF), a consolidated rental car facility (CONRAC) at Manchester Square, and an automated people mover (APM) to connect our terminal and our off-airport facilities at LAX when forecast demand levels materialize and can justify these investments. We therefore expect these facilities would be phased in over time predicated on future demand and financial feasibility.

Improving the region's future includes bringing the Metro light rail to LAWA's facilities, and together with Metro staff, we are working now to define that option. In a separate and simultaneous effort, LAWA has engaged technical experts to help LAWA staff work with Metro and we have substantially accelerated planning work to evaluate the best interface of our facilities with transit. For example, we are coordinating with Rob Ball, the Metro Project Manager of the Crenshaw LAX Line Project, on design of the Century/Aviation station and alignment issues to better integrate with any potential LAWA infrastructure at Manchester Square.

With Metro staff, we have identified a set of appropriate sites at LAWA facilities that allow for definition of the Metro light rail alignments that would result in direct connections to the Central Terminal Area (CTA) at LAX. These interface options include an area west of Sepulveda on the east end of the CTA, the proposed ITF, or Manchester Square. The location on the east end of the CTA allows for an on-airport MTA station that can link up directly to our airport circulator system. LAWA is prepared to offer this site to MTA for station development. We believe that this offer of LAWA's scarce, and ultimately finite, real estate in the CTA demonstrates a strong commitment and desire to encourage the Metro light rail directly into LAX.



Arthur T. Leahy  
December 13, 2012  
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ATTACHMENT A

This planning work will not be accomplished overnight, but significant progress has been made between the two agencies. We are committed to close coordination and to identifying opportunities for Metro to link up synergistically with LAX. We look forward to continuing to work with you and the Metro staff as these efforts advance.

Sincerely,

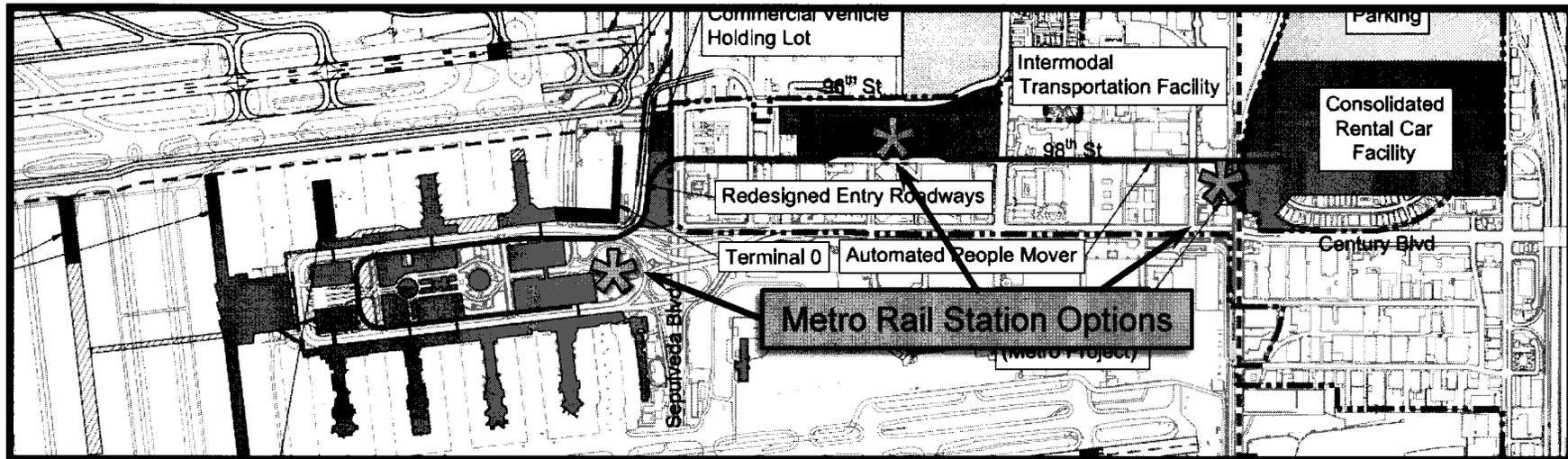
A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gina Marie Lindsey".

Gina Marie Lindsey  
Executive Director

GML:LLT

cc: Borja Leon, Deputy Mayor for the Office of Mayor Antonio R. Villaraigosa  
Renee Berlin, Executive Officer, TDI, Metro  
Roderick Diaz, Director, Systemwide Planning / Transit Corridors, Metro  
Robert Ball, Project Director, Crenshaw/LAX Metro Rail project, Metro

## Light Rail Opportunities for Airport Metro Connector



- Metro is constructing the Crenshaw/LAX Corridor Light Rail Line along Aviation Blvd., with a station on Century and Aviation.
- In a parallel effort, LAWA is collaborating with Metro to identify convenient connections to LAX. As part of the Airport Metro Connector project, LAWA is working with Metro examining potential methods to connect Crenshaw/LAX Corridor and Green Line passengers “to the airport”.
- The Staff Recommended SPAS Alternative preserves two additional opportunities to connect Metrorail light rail directly “to the airport”.