

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: February 3 , 2009

To: The Honorable City Council
c/o City Clerk, Room 395, City Hall
Attention: Honorable Wendy Greuel, Chair
Transportation Committee

From: 
Rita L. Robinson, General Manager
Department of Transportation

**SUBJECT: LATE NIGHT METRO RED LINE RESULTS - 2008 HOLIDAY
SEASON (CF 08-2119)**

SUMMARY

In September 2008, the City Council, responding to a suggestion by the Central City Association, requested that the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) extend the hours of service on its Red Line subway to 3 AM following regular service on Friday and Saturday nights during the 2008 holiday season. Metro agreed on the condition that the funds to operate the program would be provided by the private sector. Council District 14 approached stakeholders located near Red Line Stations and was successful in raising sufficient funds to operate service.

The Late Night Red Line program, which operated on Friday and Saturday nights from November 21 to December 27, 2008, is estimated to have attracted a total of about 12,000 boardings on the Red Line route between Union Station and North Hollywood (approximately 1,000 boardings per night). During this time period the Department of Transportation also operated Late Night DASH service in Downtown Los Angeles that provided connector service to the Red Line. The Late Night DASH service was also funded entirely by private sector sponsorships. While both programs were negatively impacted by the economic downturn and the rather sharp drop in gasoline prices, they demonstrated a successful public/private partnership in which the public and the private sectors worked together to operate expanded transit services that benefited both riders and the business community.

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council RECEIVE AND FILE this report as it is for informational purposes only and no Council action is required.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting on September 17, 2008, the City Council approved an amended Transportation Committee report, pursuant to a Motion (Huizar- Greuel- Garcetti- Perry), requesting that the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) consider a pilot program to extend the hours of the Metro Red Line during the 2008 holiday season. The extended Red Line service was originally proposed to operate through 3 AM on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays during the holiday season from November 1, 2008 to January 3, 2009, and was to be supported, in part, by private sponsorships.

The Transportation Committee report also called for the convening of a task force of affected Council Districts, the Department of Transportation, other departments and agencies as necessary, Metro, and the business community to design a marketing program to make the public aware of the extended Red Line hours and the benefit of using the service. The Committee report was modified by a Verbal Motion (Greuel-Huizar) deleting Thursday nights from the program because it would interfere with Metro's scheduled maintenance on the Red Line.

DISCUSSION

As Chairman, the Mayor was able to secure the agreement of the Metro Board to have the Metro Rail Red Line hours extended on Friday and Saturday nights during the holiday season upon the condition that non-Metro funds would have to be provided to operate the program and that all of the money to fund the service had to be in Metro's possession by October 17, 2008. Councilmember Huizar's office agreed to take the lead, raising the \$4,500 needed for each night of service through its *Bringing Back Broadway* program and its Executive Director, Jessica Wethington McLean. The fundraising program was successful in generating \$54,250 and it was decided to operate the service starting on Friday, November 21, 2008 and continue it each Friday and Saturday night until Saturday December 27, 2008.

Service Characteristics

Metro agreed to operate two-car trains approximately every 20 minutes on its Red Line between Union Station and North Hollywood beginning at the end of regular scheduled Friday and Saturday service and ending at approximately 3 AM on Saturday and Sunday mornings during the Late Night Red Line program. Eight trips from Union Station to North Hollywood and six trips in the other direction were operated with the last trips starting at approximately 3 AM from each end.

Marketing

CD 14 invited other affected Council offices, several departments (including LADOT), the Community Redevelopment Agency, Metro, and private sector firms to participate in a task force to promote use of the Late Night Red Line service. Metro staff was particularly helpful by suggesting that the program be folded into its on-going "Problem – Solution" campaign that Metro was already running. The group agreed to try to include mention of the Red Line in all promotional materials being produced by venues located in proximity to the Red Line Stations. In Downtown Los Angeles, the group decided to promote the Red Line and the Late Night DASH program being operated by LADOT as a package.

Ridership

Metro had schedule checkers ride each car during all of the trips in both directions on December 12, 2008. During the late night operation, a total of 1,027 passengers boarded the system; of these, 655 rode on trains operating from Union Station to North Hollywood and 372 rode trains operating in the other direction. As can be expected, most of the ridership in both directions was on the first trains following the end of scheduled service, but even the last train to North Hollywood had 42 riders and the last one in the other direction had 33 riders. Boardings and alightings occurred fairly uniformly at stations located all along the route with most boardings and alightings occurring at the terminals at either end of the Red Line. Ridership surveys were also conducted by Metro on December 13, 19, and 20, 2008. Metro staff reported that the ridership counts were very similar to those observed on December 12, 2008. One interesting note on ridership – Metro reported that about 25% of the riders were "round-trippers", passengers using the train as a hotel to escape the cold and/or rain.

Metro did not conduct ridership counts on the other nights that the Late Night Red Line operated, so the total ridership can only be estimated based on the four nights surveyed. Assuming about 1,000 boardings per night and 12 nights of operation, total ridership is estimated to be about 12,000 boardings.

Sponsorship

A number of private entities, non-profits and Council offices contributed to the late night Red Line program. Those contributing \$4,500 or more were designated as sponsors of individual nights and were identified in program publicity with their logos. These major sponsors included LA Live/Staples Center/Club Nokia, 213 Ventures, the Orpheum Theater, the Los Angeles Theater, Universal Studios, the Historic Downtown BID, and Council President Garcetti's Office. All of the service sponsors are listed in Attachment 1 of this report.

Lessons Learned

This Late Night Red Line program was first suggested by the Central City Association's Arts, Retail and Hospitality Committee in July 2008 as a request for additional Metro service during the upcoming year-end holiday season to offset the sharp increases in gasoline prices coupled with the faltering national and local business climate. When Metro said it didn't have funds to operate the program, Council District 14 agreed to approach private sponsors to fund the service. During the time the program was operating, the business climate continued to deteriorate but gasoline prices also dropped sharply, which removed much of the appeal of a public transit program for people with access to motor vehicles.

Also, funding commitments were finally secured about a month before service started, which didn't allow much lead time for attractions located along the Red Line to publicize the program to their patrons. However, the program demonstrated that a public transit agency like Metro, with a very large fixed cost transit system, can operate effective additional service if outside operational funding can be provided to support it.

A Power Point presentation prepared by Metro summarizing the results of the program is provided as Attachment 2 of this report.

Future of the Program

Currently, there is no commitment to continue operating the Late Night Red Line service during this calendar year. However, based on the operating experience in 2008, there may be renewed interest in operating the service again during the 2009 year end holiday season.

IMPACT ON THE BUDGET

This report is for informational purposes only. There is no impact on the Budget.

Attachments

ATTACHMENT 1

LATE NIGHT METRO RED LINE SERVICE 2008 HOLIDAY SEASON

SERVICE SPONSORS

213 Inc – Broadway Bar, Casey's Irish Bar and Grill, Cole's Original French Dip, Golden Gopher & Seven Grand Hollywood	Los Angeles Theater Universal Studios
LA Live	The Redwood Bar and Grill
Staples Center	La Cita
Club Nokia at LA Live	Fox Theater and The Ivar
Bringing Back Broadway	Selma Hotel
The Orpheum Theater	Newport Capital Advisors
The Los Angeles Theater	Pantages Theater
Historic Downtown LA Business Improvement District	
Millennium Partners/Argent Ventures	
Deluxe Restaurant – Aldolfo Suaya	
L.T. Properties – Dr. Alan Konce and Vytas Juuskys	
City of Los Angeles Councilmembers Eric Garcetti, Jose Huizar, Wendy Greuel and Jan Perry	

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Item 46

Red Line Late Night Service Pilot Project



Metro

Red Line Late Night Service – Pilot Project

- **November 21 through December 27**
 - **Friday and Saturday nights (12 nights total)**
 - **1:00am – 3:00am**
 - **Service every 20 minutes**
 - **2-car trains**



Metro

Red Line Late Night Service – Ridership

Surveyed Sampled Week 4 (December 12 – 13) to evaluate data results after a full month of Operations

- **Friday, December 12**
 - 1,027 passengers used the additional service
- **Saturday, December 13**
 - 986 passengers used the additional service



Metro

Red Line Late Night Service – Ridership

- WESTBOUND 655 / 623 passengers

Union Sta. Friday Saturday

» 12:37am –	177	/	132
» 12:57am –	96	/	78
» 1:17am –	110	/	70
» 1:37am –	35	/	82
» 1:57am –	90	/	100
» 2:17am –	69	/	74
» 2:37am –	36	/	46
» 2:57am –	42	/	41

– Most boardings were at Union Station (193 / 148), 7th St./Metro Center (120 / 96), Hollywood (Highland and Vine combined – 78 / 100), and Pershing Square (53 / 83).

– Most alightings were at North Hollywood (243 / 247).



Metro

Red Line Late Night Service – Ridership

- EASTBOUND 372 / 363 passengers

No. Hlywd.	Friday	Saturday
>> 1:14am –	101	/ 47
>> 1:34am –	63	/ 93
>> 1:54am –	54	/ 60
>> 2:14am –	60	/ 65
>> 2:34am –	61	/ 56
>> 2:54am –	33	/ 42

– Most boardings were at Hollywood (Highland and Vine combined – 127 / 145), North Hollywood (72 / 95) and Universal City (25 / 36). Note that 7th St./Metro Center had 8 / 12 boardings and Pershing Square had 13 / 7 boardings.

– Most alightings were at Union Station (82 / 93).



Metro

Red Line Late Night Service – Ridership

- Additional ridership data was collected on December 19-20 (Week 5) and essentially confirmed the data collected on December 12-13.
- Rail Transit Operations Supervisors assigned to oversee the field operations noted that approximately 20-25% of the passengers on each train were “round-trippers”, using the train for purposes other than reaching a specific destination.
- There were times through the early morning hours when large groups of passengers traveled together - no obvious pattern however.
- The majority of eastbound passengers tended to alight at the Hollywood/Western, the four Vermont stations, as well as Westlake/MacArthur.
- The majority of westbound passengers tended to travel to North Hollywood.



Metro

Red Line Late Night Service – Fare Recovery

- **Ticket Vending Machine / Stand Alone Validator Transactions**
 - Approximately 360 transactions made each night, equating to no more than \$450 per night at \$1.25 per transaction.
 - The revenues equated to 10% of the cost to operate the service estimated at \$4,500 per night.



Metro

Red Line Late Night Service – Service

- **During the six-week period, there were no incidents resulting in major service delays**
 - **Friday, December 19, necessary track repairs did result in some moderate delays (+5 minutes)**



Metro

Red Line Late Night Service – Security

- **Throughout the pilot program, there was significant Security/Law Enforcement presence in the system. In general, there was a very minimal amount of activity that needed to be addressed.**

- **November 21, 22, 28 – No significant activity.**
- **November 29 – Alleged robbery, subject under the influence of a controlled substance, subject creating disturbance.**
- **December 5, 6, 12, 13, 20, 21, 26 – No significant activity.**
- **December 27 – Trespasser on the trackway.**



Metro