

Coalition Politics and the Expansion of L.A.'s Transit System

By David Luberoff



Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa (center) celebrating the passage of Measure R in November 2008 with (from left to right): Tracy Rafter, Jerry Givens, Metro Board Member Richard Katz, Matt Raymond, Metro Board Member and County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Assemblyman Mike Feuer, Denny Zane, David Fleming, and Terence O'Day.

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Figure 1: Current and Under Construction Rail Lines in Los Angeles Count
(as of December 2015)



Overview

“Dream with me,” urged Antonio Villaraigosa, the first Latino elected mayor of Los Angeles in more than a century, at his star-studded inaugural in July 2005. “Dream with me of a Los Angeles where kids can walk to school in safety and where they receive an education that gives them a genuine opportunity to pursue their own dreams. Dream with me of a Los Angeles that is the leading economic and cultural center in the world. As Venice was in the 15th century, as London was in the 19th century, Los Angeles can and will be the great global city of our century.”¹

Turning to specifics, the new mayor called for making neighborhoods safer by hiring more police officers and improving the city’s schools by overhauling the L.A. Unified School District. Then, he said:

I’d like to now turn to another matter that may not sound like the stuff of dreams, but is critical if we are to improve the quality of life of our city’s residents. And that’s traffic. The time we spend stuck in traffic is time we do not spend helping our kids with their homework or being productive at work. So, Los Angeles, join me in fighting for the investment in public transportation that is the hallmark of any great city. Join me in implementing the common sense traffic plans that have been bottlenecked for too long. Join me in transforming Los Angeles into a city that connects our communities and brings us all closer together.²

Though he did not cite it specifically in his inaugural remarks, he had made it clear in the campaign that a centerpiece of his vision for the city was construction of a “Subway to the Sea” connecting central Los Angeles with Santa Monica. Discussed for at least several decades, this line would extend a 6.4-mile long downtown subway built in the mid-1990s from its current terminus at Wilshire Boulevard and Western Avenue, westward through several major commercial and residential areas, most notably the following: the Miracle Mile, a stretch of Wilshire Boulevard that includes several major museums; Beverly Hills; Century City, a 176-acre dense, mixed use development just south of Wilshire; Westwood, home of UCLA and a major hospital; and Santa Monica.

This initiative faced daunting financial, political, and legal obstacles. It would almost certainly require increasing taxes in Los Angeles County, a sprawling jurisdiction with roughly ten million inhabitants, fewer than 40 percent of whom lived in the city of Los Angeles itself. Moreover, state law required that such an increase would require approval by the voters of L.A. County in a referendum, and not just a majority but two-thirds of those voting on the question.

The history of transit in the region – where voters had approved sales tax increases to fund transit in both 1980 and 1990 – as well as the history of similar referenda in other parts of the county, strongly suggested that any such referendum proposal would have to include much more than the Wilshire project alone. Rather, it would have to include a geographically dispersed package of several long-discussed rail lines; a variety of highway projects such as improved interchanges, new HOV lanes, and, in some cases, new or widened general-purpose highways; funds that the county’s 88 localities could use for local road and transit improvements; and money to support the buses used by the bulk of the region’s transit riders. Moreover, mobilizing voter support would require building a broad-based coalition including not only local elected officials but also

leaders of business, labor, civic, and environmental groups throughout the county. It would also require a sophisticated and expensive political campaign.

History also suggested that getting such support would be extremely difficult. The two earlier referenda had just barely gotten the majority support then needed to become law. And in 1998, in the wake of cost overruns and construction problems with earlier phases of the city's subway line, more than two-thirds of the county's voters had supported a referendum that banned the use of the sales tax revenues generated by those two referenda to fund any new underground transit projects. While polling suggested that the transit agency's image was improving and that there was growing concern about traffic congestion throughout the county, Villaraigosa and the managers of "Metro," the county transit agency, judged that the time was not ripe for another referenda. Instead they focused on continuing to rebuild Metro's image and on removing other obstacles to the Wilshire subway, most notably a longstanding ban on using federal transit funds for tunneling in the area.

By mid 2007, polling was beginning to suggest that intensifying public concern about congestion (which was among the worst in the country³) and improving resident views of Metro might make it possible to get the needed two-thirds support, particularly if the measure appeared on the ballot in November 2008 when the Presidential election was likely to produce an unusually large voter turnout by people most likely to support a tax increase for transportation. Convinced by the data, Metro's leaders, several key elected officials, and some long-time activists with ties to the region's environmental and labor groups began working together to develop such a measure. Villaraigosa initially was skeptical but by mid 2008 he came on board and helped craft the final version of what eventually came to be labeled "Measure R," which called for raising the county's sales tax from 8.25 to 8.75 percent for 30 years and for spending the approximately \$40 billion planners estimated the tax would raise during this period on a geographically and substantively diverse array of projects and programs. This package, which was approved by Metro's Board in early August, included almost \$14 billion for a dozen new rail and bus rapid transit lines (including \$4 billion for the Wilshire subway, enough, planners projected, to extend the line to Westwood); almost \$8 billion for highway projects such as High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes and interchange improvements; about \$8 billion to support the county's bus system; and almost \$6 billion for a variety of improvements to local streets and intersections.

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After mounting successful campaigns to get recalcitrant state and county legislators to approve measures needed to put Measure R on the ballot, backers turned to quickly mounting a campaign in support of Measure R. In a very short time, Villaraigosa and a few other key officials – notably County Supervisor (and Metro Board member) Zev Yaroslavsky, Metro Board Member Richard Katz, and State Assemblyman Mike Feuer – raised almost \$4 million, most of it from a relatively small group of real estate developers and property owners, construction-related firms and unions, and civic leaders, to fund a sophisticated referendum campaign in support of the measure that was run by Villaraigosa's own campaign manager. At the same time, former Santa Monica Mayor Denny Zane, who had spearheaded the efforts to get labor and environmental support for the measure, continued to build up a broad-based coalition in support of the measure that included leaders of the region's major environmental, labor, business and civic organizations. In contrast, only a handful of officials and entities opposed the measure and opponents raised almost no money to campaign against it.

Thanks to the concerted campaign and the unusually high turnout the measure passed with 67.93 percent of the vote. With this vote, the county's voters had voted to raise more than twice as much money as any other local jurisdiction (or metropolitan area) since at least 1990, and had done so by a larger margin than any other major transportation tax increase referendum, for any purpose, during that period.⁴ The success of Measure R is particularly striking because California has long been a hotbed of voter resistance to higher taxes, going back to the passage of Proposition 13, a 1978 statewide measure that greatly limited local property taxes. Moreover, the Los Angeles region has long been known as an area with particularly fragmented leadership and power on key civic issues. As Feuer later noted:

This turned out to be every bit as complex, contentious, time consuming, rewarding, and significant as I anticipated it might be when we first started talking [about what became Measure R]. ... And this is among the best testaments to the importance of collaboration in solving a big problem, as any legislative problem I've been involved with. ... There is not enough attention paid in literature about effective governance to the importance of finding partners with whom to collaborate and listening carefully to what they bring to the table and then trying to coalesce into a force that will bring change. And this was a really good example of that.⁵

Since the measure's passage, Metro has moved forward with the promised projects, including the first section of the Wilshire subway extension, which is now under construction. In November 2012, in an effort to further speed up construction, Metro and transportation supporters asked voters to remove the 30-year sunset provision on the sales tax increase approved in 2008, which would have allowed Metro to issue additional bonds, with even longer maturities, backed by the future revenues. Voters again strongly supported that measure but in the end it failed because it garnered 66.11 percent of vote, just short of the two-thirds support required to become law. As of this writing, Metro is considering whether to mount another referendum campaign in 2016.

Moreover, leaders many other metropolitan areas have looked to Los Angeles for lessons on how to build successful coalitions in support of increased regional investments in transportation.

Context: Development and Transportation in Los Angeles

The Los Angeles metropolitan region, now the nation's second largest (after New York), is a particularly challenging area to serve with mass transit. On the one hand, the region is surprisingly dense, with an average of just under 7,000 people/square mile of urbanized land in 2010, almost a third more than the New York region.⁶ This density is spread very widely, however. As Michael Manville and Donald Shoup have observed, “[the] New York and San Francisco urbanized areas look like Hong Kong surrounded by Phoenix, while the Los Angeles urbanized area looks like Los Angeles surrounded by . . . well, Los Angeles.”⁷

Jobs are similarly dispersed in the region. Illustratively, of the 4.5 million jobs located within 35 miles of Los Angeles' Central Business District (CBD) in 2006, only 8.2 percent were located within 3 miles of the CBD. Of the 45 US metropolitan areas that had more than 500,000 jobs, only Detroit's CBD had a smaller share. Almost two-thirds of the jobs in the Los Angeles region were located more than 10 miles from the CBD, more than any other major metropolitan area except Detroit, Chicago, and Dallas.⁸ However, the outlying jobs tend to be concentrated in the region's many employment subcenters, which include several areas in the Wilshire Boulevard corridor – such as Century City, Westwood, and Santa Monica – and several nodes outside of Los Angeles, such as Long Beach, Glendale, and Pasadena. In fact, as of 2010, more than three-quarters of the jobs located outside the CBD in Los Angeles were in Zip Codes that ranked in the top quartile nationally for employment density (at least 1,330 jobs/square mile). This was more than 20 percentage points higher than in any other metropolitan area in the United States.⁹

The polycentric patterns mean that a relatively small share of the region's residents use transit and those that do tend to use buses and are poor. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2013, five-year American Community Survey (ACS), only about six percent of the approximately 13 million residents of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which includes Los Angeles County, use transit to get to work (and of these 90 percent travelled by bus). In addition, the median income of those who use transit to get to work in the Los Angeles MSA was only 51 percent of the median income of those who drive alone. The transit share in the Los Angeles MSA was about one-sixth of the transit share in the New York City-area MSA and about half the transit share in the Chicago- and Boston-area MSAs. Moreover, less than half the commuters in those metro areas used trains and there was little difference between the median income of transit users and those who drove alone. On the other hand, only 1.4 percent of the commuters in the Dallas/Fort Worth-area MSA used transit, 71 percent of those transit commuters traveled by bus, and transit users' median income was only 62 percent that of those who drove alone. Moreover, in sharp contrast to many other metro areas, the share of those using transit to get to work in the Los Angeles region has remained fairly constant for several decades.¹⁰

Transportation Policymaking in the Decentralized Region

The region's decentralized development patterns are the result of decades of debate and decisions about both land use and transportation. When the city began to grow in the decades after World War I, its leaders consciously chose to discourage high-density development, because, according to historian Robert Fogelson, they "assumed that the great [dense] city was no longer the most pleasant place for living or the most efficient location for working. They proposed as an alternative, residential dispersion and business decentralization."¹¹ These growth patterns were facilitated by a vast network of privately-owned but publicly authorized streetcar lines whose owners, most notably Henry Huntington, took the lead in developing the areas served by those lines. By the mid-1920s, the emergence of the automobile began to speed up the process of decentralization, so much so that downtown business leaders unsuccessfully proposed construction of an ambitious rail system focused on the city's commercial core. While those proposals failed, the region moved forward with an extensive freeway system, initially built with local and state funding and later with funding from the federal Interstate Highway program. The extensive network of new highways helped fuel the region's rapid and decentralized growth after World War II. Although subsequent planning – notably the city's mid-1970s "Centers Plans" – did help produce denser development downtown and in parts of the Wilshire corridor and other areas, in the 1980s voters rejected similar plans for many other parts of the city.¹²

The anti-highway backlash that spread throughout American urban areas in the late 1960s and early 1970s stymied or stalled most efforts to further expand the region's highway system which saw its last major expansion in 1993 with the opening of the Century Freeway, a 19-mile highway from Norwalk to El Segundo that had been the subject of a bitter court battle in the 1970s that ended in 1979 with a groundbreaking consent decree establishing an ambitious housing replacement program, extensive outreach to minority and women-owned contractors and workers, and construction of a transit line in the highway's median.¹³ Opposition to planned highways combined with increased concerns about the environment spurred greater interest in mass transit, particularly rail transit, which had been unable to compete with the convenience provided by automobiles. In the post-World War II era, Los Angeles' private trolley and bus operators were replaced by public entities and trolley service rapidly contracted, culminating in abandonment of the last line in 1963. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the region's two transit entities (one charged with operating the bus system, the other with developing a region-wide plan that might include new rail lines) regularly tried but failed to convince voters to raise sales taxes to fund a county-wide rail system that would include subways in and near the center of Los Angeles and a series of light rail lines connecting the county's other major cities with Los Angeles as well.¹⁴

Despite these defeats, in the late 1970s, one of the region's transit agencies was able to move forward with ambitious plans for a downtown-oriented subway system that would be funded mainly by grants from the then-new federal transit program with matching funds from the state of California (drawing on gas tax revenues). The project, which was a top priority for Tom Bradley, who was mayor of Los Angeles from 1973 to 1993, called for building a mainline tunnel from Union Station, at the eastern end of downtown Los Angeles, westward along Wilshire Boulevard, the city's main commercial corridor before turning north to Hollywood

(where property owners hoped it would spur redevelopment) and continuing under the mountains to North Hollywood in the San Fernando Valley, home to a large number of the city's residents. Planners and backers anticipated that a subsequent project would extend the subway along Wilshire Boulevard to Westwood while another project would extend the line east from Union Station to largely minority, lower-income neighborhoods on the city's Eastside. Work started on this project in the early 1980s but in the mid 1980s its route was changed after Representative Henry Waxman, a powerful Democrat whose district included most of the Wilshire corridor, secured passage of legislation banning the use of federal funds to build a subway in the mid-Wilshire district. The ostensible reason was concerns about potential explosions from underground pockets of methane gas in the corridor. In addition, some residents and businesses in the area opposed the subway, some because they feared it might bring unwelcome outsiders into the area while others fought it because they worried that the line might drive up rents and force them out.¹⁵

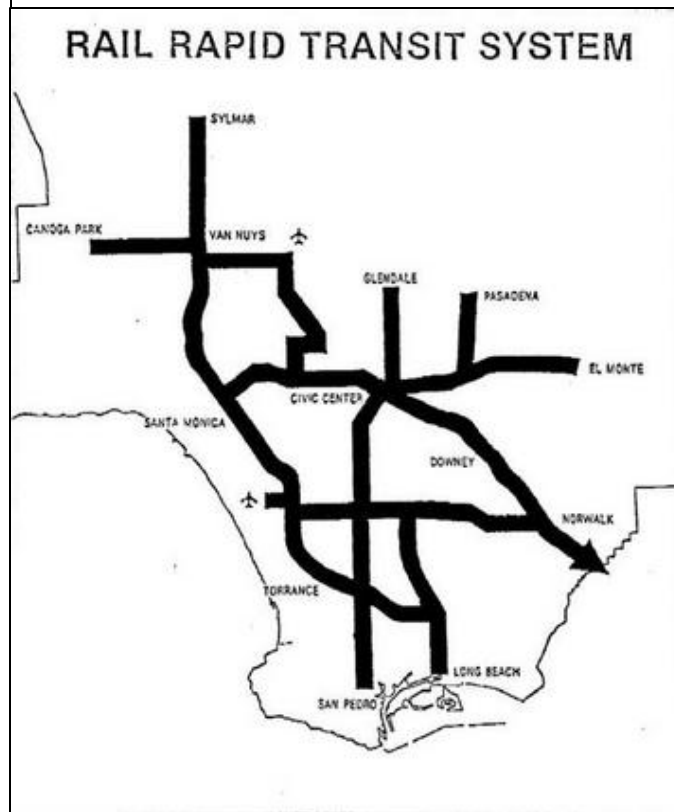
Creating a Transit Coalition

The history of failed referenda, as well as the success of referenda in other locales, most notably a successful 1971 referendum in the Atlanta region, made it clear that voters would more likely to approve a referendum that went beyond just funding new rail lines and instead funded a variety of transportation improvements. This proved to be the template used to finally pass a sales tax increase for transit in 1980, and with some modifications it was used to pass another increase in 1990 and, with further modifications, to shape Measure R in 2008.

Proposition A, which passed in 1980, increased the sales tax in the county by .5 percentage points and divided that money in three ways. First, 35 percent of the money (about \$210 million a year) was dedicated for capital spending on a 180-mile, countywide rail transit system in broadly defined corridors throughout the county. (See Figure 2)¹⁶ The second key feature was a "local return," provision requiring that 25 percent of the money from the tax be distributed to the county's 88 localities, which could use the money to enhance local bus services or to build facilities such as park-and-ride lots or transit stations.¹⁷ Finally, for the first three years most of the remaining money was set aside to subsidize a reduction in bus fares, which had recently increased, from 50 cents to 85 cents. After that time, the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (which oversaw transit planning at the time) could use the money for continued subsidies, for rail construction, or some combination of the two.

The measure passed with a 54-46 margin, with the strongest support coming from communities that would be served by the new rail lines, including Los Angeles where 61 percent of the voters backed it.¹⁸ The first rail line funded by the measure was the Blue Line, a light rail line from Long Beach to downtown Los Angeles that opened in 1990. It was followed in 1995 by the Green Line, a light rail line built in the median of the Century Freeway that runs close to (but not into) Los Angeles International Airport.

Figure 2: Map Accompanying Proposition A



The reduced bus fares spurred a substantial increase in bus ridership, from 354 million boardings in 1982 to almost 500 million in 1985. Nevertheless, in 1985, the subsidy was curtailed to provide more money for rail, the bus fare was increased to 85 cents and bus ridership fell steadily over the next several years before it plateaued at about 400 million boardings a year in the late 1980s and early 1990s.¹⁹

In 1990, by a 50.4-to-49.6 margin, the county's voters approved Proposition C, an additional half-cent sale tax increase for transportation. About 40 percent of the approximately \$360 million a year that the new tax raised was to build or operate rail or bus lines; 20 percent went to the county's cities for local transportation projects; 25 percent was set aside for transit-related highway improvements, such as high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes; 10 percent was set aside for commuter rail and related construction (e.g., park-and-ride lots); and the 5

percent was to finance expanded security on buses and trains.

Emerging Problems with Ambitious Plans

Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, the region's two transit entities (the Southern California Rapid Transit District the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission) regularly battled over a variety of issues, including whether discretionary funds should be used to further subsidize the region's bus system or to provide more funds for the ambitious rail plan, which by the early 1990s called for spending \$78 billion over 30 years to build over 400 miles of rail. Finally, in 1993, the state legislature passed a long-discussed measure, ordering a merger of the two entities into a new Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA, known since the early 2000s as "Metro") that would build and operate the region's transit system, partially fund highway projects (including transit related projects such as HOV lanes) that generally were built by CalTrans, the state highway agency, and subsidize local bus systems in the county's major cities. The MTA is governed by 13-member board that includes the county's five supervisors (who are elected by district), the mayor of Los Angeles and three people appointed by the mayor, and four elected officials from the county's other cities. This structure, observed Roger Snoble, who served as the agency's CEO from 2001 until 2009, ensured that "the politics on the board are all geographic" because each member tries to ensure that his or her district is getting its "fair share" of Metro's spending.²⁰

The new institutional structure did not resolve the long-standing disputes, particularly because major cost overruns on early projects intensified the fight for resources. In 1994 after the MTA's board voted to increase bus fares, curtail a popular monthly pass program, and provide additional funding for a planned light rail line to Pasadena, several advocacy groups filed a suit against the MTA in federal court. The key plaintiff was the Bus Rider's Union (BRU), an advocacy group that was part of the city's Labor/Community Strategy Center, a "multiracial think-tank/act-tank" that works to spur "radical, structural change."²¹ Filed with the support of several of the city's political leaders, including Villaraigosa then a young labor leader who served as an alternate member of MTA's board, the suit contended that since bus riders were much more likely to be minorities while rail riders, particularly those using the new commuter rail lines, were much more likely to be white, the MTA was "intentionally discriminating against racial and ethnic minority groups and perpetuating a pattern of racially discriminatory delivery of transportation services."²² After almost two years of wrangling, MTA's board – reportedly acting at the urging of then Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan who was running for reelection – agreed to a consent decree settling the suit. As implemented, the decree, which drew significant attention from scholars and activists interested in equity issues, not only required that Metro reduce bus fares but also that it spend almost \$1 billion over the next decade to upgrade and expand its bus fleet.²³

Construction problems – most notably a giant sinkhole that appeared on Hollywood Boulevard in July 1995 – further undermined public confidence in the agency. Finally, in 1997, acting on the recommendations of then-CEO Julian Burke, a corporate restructuring expert brought in to address the agency's growing fiscal problems, the MTA's board halted design work on several subway and light rail lines (though it did allow construction work to continue on the subway to North Hollywood and on a short spur along Wilshire Boulevard that was to be the start of the long-planned western branch). And in 1998, by a more than 2-to-1 margin the county's voters approved a referendum (proposed by County Supervisor and Metro Board Member Yaroslavsky, a one-time subway supporter) banning the MTA from funding new subways with any sales tax revenues generated by Propositions A or C.²⁴

Getting the MTA Back on Track

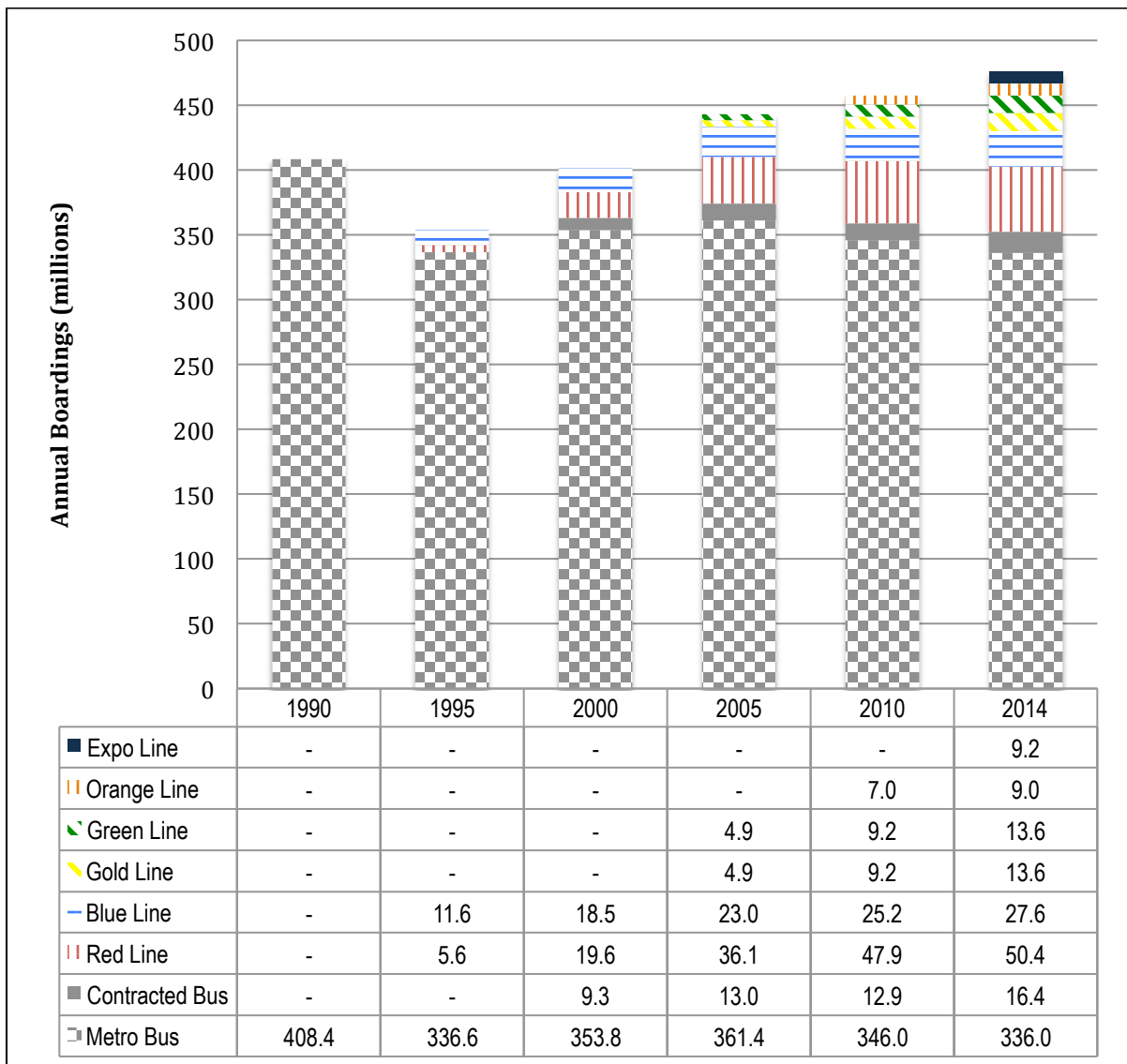
Over the next several years Burke and Metro's Board were able stabilize the agency's finances and to start considering potential new investments that would help address increased highway congestion in the county, which was continuing to grow at a steady pace. The BRU's backers and many of the region's academics focused on transportation believed that the agency should focus on buses and traffic management measures and be wary of additional rail plans (except perhaps in the Wilshire corridor where there was a ban on using federal funds to build a subway). However, political and civic leaders in a host of the county's localities successfully pressed for projects in corridors where previous plans (and the map that accompanied the 1980 referendum) had promised new rail lines.

Most notably, supporters of the proposed light rail line to Pasadena had continued to press for that project. This effort was actively opposed by leaders of the Bus Riders Union but was supported by several key legislators, including Villaraigosa, their one-time ally who had been

elected to the State Assembly in 1994 and served as the body’s speaker from 1998 to 2000.²⁵ In 1998, the legislature created a new special authority to plan and build the line with funding provided by the federal government, the state government, and the MTA (which was to operate the line once it was built).

Officially called the Gold Line, the project – which serves downtown Los Angeles, several lower-income, largely Latino areas northeast of downtown, and more affluent and more racially and ethnically diverse areas in Pasadena and South Pasadena – opened in 2003. While it drew relatively modest ridership, its supporters pressed for extending the line eastward into the San Gabriel Valley to the county line in Claremont, as had been called for in the maps that accompanied the 1980 transit referendum.

Figure 3: Annual Boardings on Metro’s Rail and Bus Lines²⁶



In addition, in 1999, after several board members went to Curitiba, Brazil to view its Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, the MTA began planning for an approximately 14-mile long, \$325 million BRT project in the San Fernando Valley on a former freight rail corridor where earlier plans had called for building a light rail line. The BRT project, which was named the Orange Line, opened in 2005. It currently carries about 25,000-to-30,000 passengers on an average weekday, which makes it one of the nation's most heavily used BRT lines.

In 2001, work also began on a six-mile long light rail line to largely Latino neighborhoods on the East Side of Los Angeles that was to be a replacement for the Eastside subway that had been cancelled in 1997. This line, which was completed in 2009, is part of the Gold Line, which follows a U-shaped route connecting both East Los Angeles and Pasadena with Union Station in downtown Los Angeles. With its introduction, ridership on the Gold Line increased from slightly more than 20,000 weekday boardings in early 2009 to more than 40,000 weekday boardings in FY 2015.²⁷ (See **Figure 3**)

Prioritizing Projects

With new projects on the boards and several more being seriously discussed, Burke wanted to make sure that MTA's Board did not commit to building projects that it could not afford. A key vehicle in this effort was an updated version of the agency's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which detailed its broad spending plans for the next 25 years. Unlike the 1995 LRTP, the new plan made it clear that the MTA faced significant fiscal constraints. In particular, the plan estimated that while the MTA was expected to receive \$106.4 billion in local, state and federal funds over the next 25 years, almost 90 percent of that money was already committed either to operations or already approved capital projects including new buses, the Gold Line, and the first section of the "Expo" light rail line from downtown west to Culver City in a former freight corridor adjacent to Exposition Boulevard, about three miles south of Wilshire Boulevard.

Only \$11.2 billion was available for new transit or highways, significantly less than the more than \$30 billion that the agency's planners had estimated was "needed" to accommodate the region's projected growth.²⁸ Given this gap, the plan included a "constrained" list of additional projects that could be funded and a "strategic" list of projects that planners and the board believed were needed but that could not be funded given existing revenue sources. The "constrained" list allocated about half of the available \$11.2 billion to transit, almost a quarter of it for buses and smaller amounts for three long-discussed transit projects: the second section of the Expo Line (from Culver City to Santa Monica), a light rail or BRT line along Crenshaw Boulevard, which passes through several historically African-American neighborhoods in South Central Los Angeles and cities just south of Los Angeles; and a north/south busway in the San Fernando Valley. The list of unfunded "strategic" transit projects included the western extension of the Wilshire subway and the eastward extension of the Gold Line past Pasadena. The plan had little discussion about how any of these projects might be funded, noting only in passing that a regional fuel tax or emission fee might generate needed resources while also discouraging peak-period travel in single-occupancy vehicles.²⁹ Although inclusion in the plan did not formally approve or appropriate funds for specific projects, it still was very important because it made it generally clear which projects were immediate priorities, which were next in line to become priorities, and which were not likely to be started for many years. In fact, many of the

unfunded projects listed as the agency's "strategic" priorities in the 2001 plan not only received significant funding from Measure R, they also were scheduled to be among the first projects that would be built with money from that initiative.

Rebuilding the Agency's Reputation

Not long after the plan's release, Burke stepped down and was replaced as CEO by Roger Snoble, a well-respected transit manager who came to Los Angeles from Dallas where he had overseen construction of that city's new light rail system. Snoble believed that carefully chosen, well-designed transit projects not only had the potential to serve travel patterns but could also reshape land uses. He was attracted to Los Angeles by the MTA's still-ambitious transit plans, which he thought offered an important and unique opportunity to reshape a major metropolitan area.

Snoble also believed that he needed to keep rebuilding the agency's reputation so that it would be in a better position to get additional resources it needed carry out its plans. To do so, he pursued a five-pronged strategy. First, he focused on improving its day-to-day operations, most notably by reorganizing management of its bus system to better focus on operational issues. Second, he began to focus on operating costs, particularly for buses, which covered a relatively small share of their costs. Consequently, in a decision allowed by the consent decree but opposed by the BRU, in May 2003, the agency's board voted to raise fares, discontinue transfers, and increase the cost of monthly passes.

Third, recognizing that the "Board had more things that they wanted to do than Metro could afford," he continued Burke's strategy of identifying key projects and sequencing them in fiscally responsible ways. For the first several years, this meant building projects that were approved or close to approval at the time of his arrival. Thereafter, he prioritized the Exposition Boulevard line, where in response to a grassroots lobbying campaign, the agency's board decided to build a light rail line rather than a BRT project, though only after the previously approved rail projects were completed. The agency also began introducing new services, such as express buses on its busiest lines, including Wilshire Boulevard, where buses, which sometimes ran every 90 seconds, were routinely caught in the same slow-moving traffic that stymied everyone else.

Fourth, Snoble actively worked to rebuild support among key business and civic leaders, most notably by working with leaders of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and the Automobile Club of Southern California to create "Mobility 21," a group that brought together elected officials, transportation providers, businesses, local municipalities, labor and community leaders to discuss and develop solutions to the transportation issues facing the county.³⁰ Finally, he greatly expanded its communications and marketing efforts, which were headed by Matt Raymond, who came with Snoble from Dallas. "Marketing is learning what the customer wants," Snoble explained. "... Anyone going into city planning should learn about marketing."³¹ A key part of this effort was to rebrand the agency as "Metro" and to communicate a new vision via a vastly expanded advertising budget, which reportedly went from \$450,000 a year to \$4.5 million a year.³² In addition, Raymond worked to ensure that Metro's various elements presented a unified and compelling message.

Whether or not as a result of these efforts, Metro's public image significantly improved over the next several years. Periodic polling done by Metro found the share of county residents saying that Metro "uses tax dollars wisely" rising from 42 percent in 2000 to 52 percent in 2002 and 58 percent in 2004.³³

There were other signs of growing support as well. In 2003, State Senator Kevin Murray (D-Culver City), chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, proposed a measure authorizing Metro to put a 6½-year, .5 percent increase in the sales tax on the ballot to fund a specific list of transportation improvements. (Such a law was needed because total taxes in Los Angeles County were at state-imposed limits.) Murray's bill, which passed in fall 2003, included 15 specific transit and highway projects, almost all of them drawn from the "strategic" list in the 2001 LRTP. In addition, the measure included funding for a long discussed "Regional Connector," a project in downtown Los Angeles that would connect the Gold Line with both the Blue Line and the soon-to-be built Exposition line. While this project had drawn little attention from elected officials or local business groups, it was strongly backed by Metro's planners who believed that by connecting the lines, the Regional Connector would have dramatic effects on ridership and system efficiency. Despite the bill's success in the legislature, Metro's board and senior staff did not put a measure on the ballot, judging that it was unlikely to attract the two-thirds support that state law now required to pass such a tax increase. However, the bill (including the list of projects that it would fund) became the basis for subsequent legislation needed to get Measure R on the ballot.

Making Transit a Mayoral Priority

Expanding the region's rail transit system was not a priority for James Hahn, who had been elected mayor in 2001 by a 54-46 margin over Villaraigosa. Rather, with federal and state aid in very short supply, Hahn once observed, "The question is, 'How do you squeeze capacity from what we've got?'"³⁴ Consequently, his administration focused on smaller-scale, city-led initiatives, such as improving traffic flow at key intersections and expediting pothole repairs.

As the economy improved in the first part of the decade, residents became increasingly concerned about congestion. Los Angeles annually ranked first or second, it bears note, in the Texas Transportation Institute's annual ranking of U.S. metropolitan areas by congestion severity.³⁵ Polling done by *The Los Angeles Times* before the May 2005 run-off mayoral election, which featured a rematch between Hahn and Villaraigosa, showed that 24 percent thought "traffic congestion" should be the mayor's top priority. Another 7 percent cited "road/street/ highway improvements" and 6 percent cited "public transportation" as their nominees for top priority, for a total of 37 percent saying that a transportation objective should be the mayor's top priority. In 2001 only 18 percent had done so.³⁶ Villaraigosa, who prevailed in this campaign by a 59-41 majority over Hahn, strongly advocated a more robust transit agenda particularly highlighting the long-dormant Wilshire subway line, which he dubbed "The Subway to the Sea."

He later recalled that the project was part of a larger vision he had, to make "L.A. the cleanest green city in America." This vision, he said, was three-pronged. He wanted, first, "to move L.A. from its addiction to the single-passenger automobile, and freeways, to a world-class

system of buses, light rail, busways, and subways where they made sense.” Second, he thought, “our absolute [planning] priority should be [to] ... create an elegant density around rail and busway routes, and particularly around stations.” Third, he aspired to achieve significant improvements in air quality.³⁷

Villaraigosa appointed Jaime de la Vega, who had been Riordan’s transportation advisor, as deputy mayor for transportation issues and made former Assemblyman Richard Katz, author of the legislation creating Metro and a long-time leader in the San Fernando Valley, one of his three appointees to Metro’s board, where he would subsequently play a critical behind-the-scenes role in shaping Measure R. Moreover, unlike Hahn, Villaraigosa became an active member of the board and a visible public advocate for his transportation priorities, above all the Westside subway. “The rap on me,” he later observed, “is that I used the ‘bully pulpit’ and that I loved a camera. But what the press really doesn’t understand is that... without the ‘bully pulpit,’ the Mayor really isn’t anything.”³⁸

The Wilshire Subway and the New Long Range Plan

While Villaraigosa was “announcing his plans to do the Subway to the Sea,” David Yale, who has overseen transportation programming and long range financial planning at Metro for many years, remembered the agency’s financial analysts were saying “we can’t fit it in,” the agency’s long range funding plan, “no way, no how.”³⁹

A key first step in addressing this problem was to remove the ban on using federal funding for tunneling in the corridor. Working with Snoble and others at Metro, Villaraigosa and his appointees ramped up nascent efforts to convince Waxman to lift the ban on federal funding for a subway in the Wilshire corridor. Waxman agreed to have an expert “peer review” panel convened by the American Public Transportation Association review the issue. After the panel reported that tunneling could be done safely in the corridor, he agreed to push for a removal of the ban, which was finally done in legislation that passed in late 2007.⁴⁰ The next step was to make the Wilshire project a top priority for funding in the agency’s updated Long Range Transportation Plan. Work on that plan began in mid 2005, not long after Villaraigosa took office. Metro’s staff began this process by reviewing financial and project cost projections from the present to 2030. Initial analyses, during the first half of 2006, suggested that the funding picture was challenging but manageable. On the operating side, staff projected that Metro faced a \$1.5 billion deficit that could be closed with several measures, most notably fare hikes.

On the capital side, staff estimated that because of rising cost estimates for planned projects Metro would have no capacity to fund new projects until the early 2020s when they projected Metro would have about \$7 billion available to fund new transit or highway projects.⁴¹ This was more than enough to fund the “Subway to the Sea” (as far as Westwood), then estimated to cost about \$4.8 billion (in 2015 dollars).⁴² However, committing such a large share of available funds to one project clearly would be politically challenging, particularly because the county was growing rapidly – by a projected 24 percent (or 2.4 million people), over the next 25 years – and projected growth was fastest in areas far from the Wilshire Corridor.⁴³ (See Figure 4 and Figure 5)

Figure 4

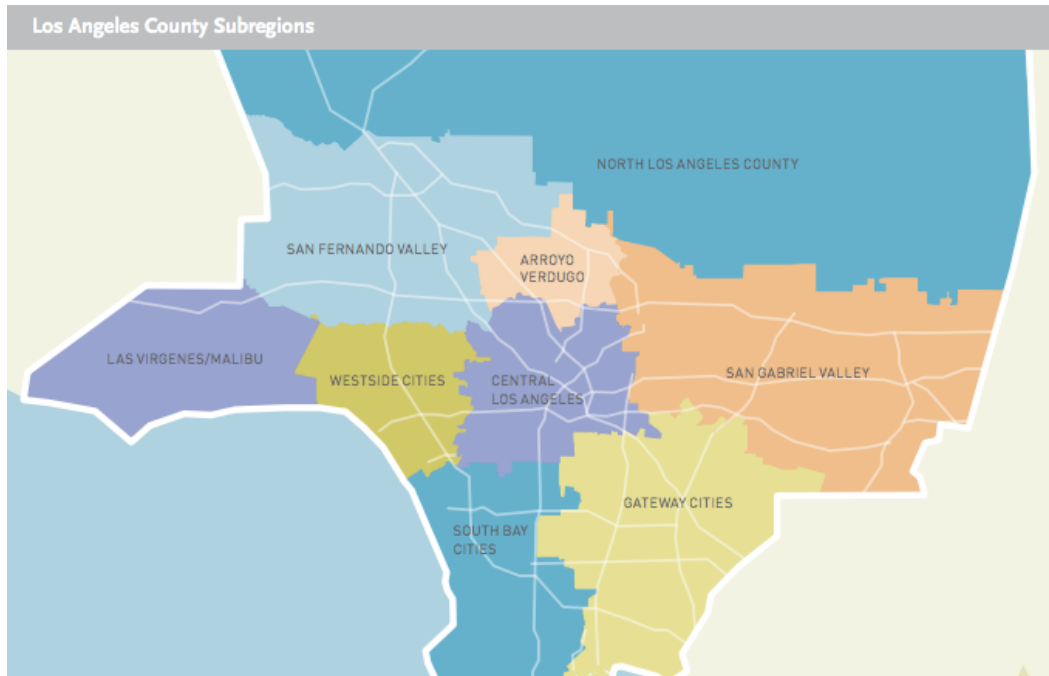
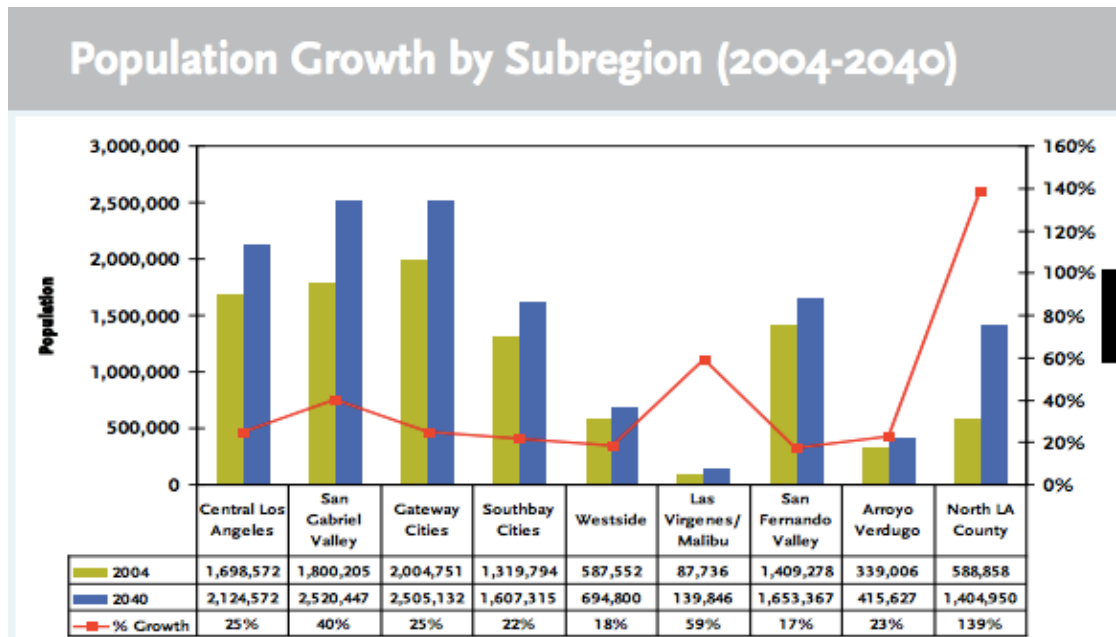


Figure 5



Congestion Pricing: The Road Not Taken

Given these projections, Metro's planners warned that just building projects in the 2001 "constrained" plan would not improve travel speeds in the region. Rather, they predicted that even if all these projects in the constrained plan were built, average morning peak-period speeds on the region's freeways would drop from 34.4 miles per hour to 22.9 mph. They added this was better than the 20 mph peak-period freeway speeds that would occur if Metro did not build any of the projects. Meeting the travel needs of over 12 million people will require more than new infrastructure. It requires changes in travel behavior. ... Speeds could significantly improve and transit ridership would double if smart growth and pricing strategies were aggressively implemented.⁴⁵ The planners also reported that the only way to sustain current peak-period travel speeds was for the county and state to take the politically difficult steps of imposing congestion charges on the region's highways and revising land-use policies so that localities had to direct virtually all new growth to dense projects near transit stations. As they noted in a presentation for the agency's board: This assertion was consistent with several analyses done over the last two decades by the region's planning and air quality agencies as well as by many local scholars. Moreover, the policies had been actively discussed (both regionally and nationally) by scholars and policymakers and were similar to those included in the official land-use plan for the region developed by the Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) in the early 1990s.⁴⁶ However, SCAG's proposals had never been adopted, largely because they were very unpopular with voters and the officials who represented them. Apparently judging that there still was little support for road pricing and more stringent land-use controls, Metro's Board did not seriously consider pushing for them. Consequently, the proposals received little public attention. One notable exception that seemed to confirm the Board's judgment, was a December 2007 editorial in *The Los Angeles Daily News* titled "Double Jeopardy: Pay Twice for The Same Old Roads? No Thanks, Metro."⁴⁷

With the pricing and land-use options off the table, the planners focused on the cost and ridership projections for a host of potential projects. In the end, they developed a ranking system that gave equal weight to "project performance" (as measured by boardings/mile and annual boardings/million dollars in capital costs) and "corridor need" (as measured by density, share of population that was transit dependent, major activity centers/mile, and current transit use).⁴⁸ The highest scoring project was the \$723 million Regional Connector, which planners estimated would have 9,547 annual boardings per million dollars invested, significantly more than any other project under consideration. The next highest-ranked project was the \$2.5 billion Westside subway extension to Century City, which did not do as well on the boardings/dollars metric but did very well on most of the other metrics. Critics, who included the BRU and many local transport scholars, contended that it would be far more cost-effective in the Wilshire corridor to focus on enhanced bus service. Snoble and others retorted that given the existing traffic congestion in this corridor additional bus service would be ineffective unless Metro were to take the politically unpopular (and probably impossible) task of converting general-purpose lanes to reserved bus lanes.

Metro's planners also found that the proposed extension of the light rail Gold Line from Pasadena through the San Gabriel Valley to the county line was not particularly cost-effective.

However, the independent authority that had built the Gold Line to Pasadena disagreed. Whereas Metro projected that project would cost \$2.2 billion, the Authority estimated that it would cost \$1.2 billion. Both used the same ridership estimates, but the cost differential meant that the Authority projected 5,120 annual boardings/million dollars, where Metro estimated just 2,855. Metro's planners added that even if the authority's cost estimates were correct, the project should be low priority because it was located in a low-density corridor with few transit-dependent residents or major activity centers.⁴⁹ Among its many influential supporters, however, were several powerful federal and state legislators, who continued to actively press for it.

Since Metro is also charged with developing county highway plans, the staff also assessed a variety of highway and HOV projects. Of these, the highest ranked was a long-discussed and heavily disputed proposal to "close" a five-mile gap in SR-710, most of it in South Pasadena. Preliminary plans, which had both ardent supporters and adamant opponents, called for a tunnel under the residential neighborhoods in the "gap," (most of them in South Pasadena) estimated to cost \$2.2-\$2.8 billion (half from Metro; half from tolls). It was followed closely by a \$161 million plan to build HOV lanes on the I-605 highway in the San Gabriel Valley.⁵⁰

The Difficult Funding Puzzle Becomes More Complicated

Over the next 18 months rising cost estimates for committed projects, plus some reduced revenue projections, led Metro's staff to reduce its estimates of future funding availability. At the same time, there was increased pushback against staff's efforts to rank projects that had been on the 2001 list of strategic but unfunded projects. Illustratively, in August 2007, staff estimated that funds available for new projects had shrunk to \$4.2 billion from the \$7 billion projected two years earlier. Moreover, recognizing the breadth of support for various projects beyond those they had highlighted for priority two years earlier, the staff's presentation to the Board no longer ranked the various potential projects. Instead, they presented 13 geographically diverse transit and highway projects that they believed should be included in the new list of "First Priority Strategic Projects," to be funded if other resources became available. The list included the Regional Connector and the Westside subway extension – but only for about four miles to La Cienega Boulevard rather than seven miles to Century City. It also included extending the Gold Line to the county line, which Snoble said, "was not my highest priority" but was a project whose political support could not be ignored.⁵¹

The funding picture became even bleaker in January 2008 when Snoble and Carol Inge, Metro's chief planning officer, informed the board that due to a modest drop in projected future revenues and a "significant" increase in construction costs for already committed capital projects, Metro would have to delay some already-committed projects and could not undertake any new capital projects before 2030. Summing up the stark new reality, the staff's presentation to the board noted that while the plan still was an "ambitious program of Countywide transportation improvements" that preserved all of the projects in the 2001 LRTP's baseline and the "constrained" project lists: "It is not enough, however, to reach the level of mobility that this County requires. We must aggressively pursue new revenue sources [that] should accelerate the schedule of funded Baseline projects ... [and] be used to add new projects to the Plan."⁵²

Creating a Winning Coalition

Even as the funding picture continued to deteriorate, public concerns about congestion continued to grow, as did public support, as indicated in polls, for Metro. To a variety of key actors – some within Metro, some on its board, and others outside the agency – this convergence suggested an intriguing possibility: that contrary to conventional wisdom, perhaps it might be feasible to persuade two-thirds of the county’s voters to approve a tax increase for new transportation improvements. If so, the ideal timing for such a referendum was almost certainly November 2008, when the presidential election would produce a surge in voter turnout, particularly among the lower-income and minority voters who polling and experience indicated were most well-disposed toward transit and most open to tax increases for it.

This meant that key decisions about exactly what to propose, and key actions to organize a political campaign, had to be taken by mid-summer at the latest. The most prominent local elected officials, most notably Villaraigosa and Yaroslavsky, were unwilling to commit until more evidence accumulated that success was within reach. Consequently, a variety of other actors, both inside and outside Metro, took the initial lead.

Externally, the most significant development was the creation of Move LA, a broad-based coalition of environmental, labor, and business leaders who supported increased spending on transit. The group’s roots went back to early 2007 when Denny Zane, a former mayor of Santa Monica, and Terence O’Day, a longtime environmental activist, had created a “Subway to the Sea Coalition” on behalf of the Westside subway project. Metro officials responded that, in their view, new funding could not be obtained for any single project alone, but only for a regional, broadly diversified set of projects and programs. Zane recalls that he was unconvinced until he met with Jim Thomas, a major developer and property owner who, Zane said, is “revered in the business community.” According to Zane, Thomas “said: he thought what we were doing was real important but that we were too focused on the subway. The only way you get a two-thirds [county-wide] vote is if all parts of the county think it’s important.”⁵³

Additionally, Zane and his colleagues realized, a tax-increase ballot measure would only have a chance if it had strong support from key labor, business, and environmental leaders and organizations. Drawing on their connections, Zane and O’Day invited about 35 such leaders to a meeting in fall 2007 – many of whom, Zane said, “had never been in the same room before”⁵⁴ – to discuss whether such a referendum made sense and, if so, how to jumpstart efforts to get it on the ballot. Every entity but one accepted their invitation, and the group agreed to host a major public event aimed at persuading key officials (such as Villaraigosa), who would be invited to speak, that key constituencies would actively support a well-designed measure.

The event, which was held January 2008 at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, seat of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, drew more than 300 people. Speakers included John Fairbank, a pollster whose firm regularly did work for Metro, who reported that in a November 2007 poll 60 percent of respondents had expressed “initial” support for a ballot measure and 69 percent had expressed support after hearing a brief statement on what the measure might fund and why it was

needed. “We’re even getting Republicans to support this,” he noted. “Traffic is at such a frustrating level.”⁵⁵

The focus on the sales tax, which is regressive, was not accidental. Rather, Snoble said, at Metro’s request, Fairbank’s firm had “tested all the possible revenue sources,” and found that all major categories of voters, including those with lower incomes, clearly preferred the sales tax to other plausible options, most commonly because “it doesn’t feel like you’re being punished and it’s shared by everybody.”⁵⁶ Zane echoed this finding, noting: “The issue was winability ... and the only option that came close was the sales tax.”⁵⁷

Overall, recalled Zane, “the nature of the discussion ... the breadth and significance of the leadership in the room, and the exceptional clarity of direction that emerged was remarkable.”⁵⁸ Consequently, the meeting’s organizers officially launched Move LA, a group that would help develop and, hopefully support, a transportation funding measure that would go on the ballot in November. Zane became executive director of the group, which was funded by several area foundations, labor unions, and businesses⁵⁹

However, Villaraigosa, who was preparing to run for reelection in 2009 (and who was in the midst of another tax-related referendum campaign), was not yet ready to commit. Nor was Yaroslavsky, who told attendees at the meeting: “I’m a cynic by design. I’m skeptical you can get 66 2/3 [percent of the vote] during a recession.”⁶⁰ On the other hand, Metro Board chair Pam O’Connor, who was also mayor of Santa Monica, did advocate proceeding to a referendum. And State Assemblyman Mike Feuer, who represented West Side communities and parts of the San Fernando Valley, began working with Metro Board members and senior staff to draft state authorizing legislation for a November referendum.

Laying the Groundwork

Throughout the latter part of 2007, Snoble recalled, Raymond, Metro’s chief marketing and communications officer, and Fairbank, Metro’s pollster, kept meeting with him “saying ‘we can do this.’” Finally, sometime in late 2007, Snoble recalled, “I said, ‘we’re close. Let’s start trying to sell people on this.’”⁶¹

The first step was to obtain state authorizing legislation. In February, Assemblyman Feuer introduced a bill allowing Metro to propose a referendum that would increase the county sales tax by 0.5 percentage points for a period of 30 years to finance mass transit and highway expenditures, both capital and operating. (Technically, Feuer’s bill amended the 2003 law that had given Metro authority to propose a 6.5-year, 0.5 percentage point tax increase). Metro’s staff projected that, if adopted, this increase would generate \$35-to-\$40 billion over its 30 year term. As required by state law, Feuer’s bill required that Metro’s request had to include a detailed spending plan and made it clear that Metro had to fund all the projects listed in the 2003 law at levels at least equal to what they would have received under that law.

In March, Metro released a draft of its revised LRTP for comment. The document included a “strategic” list of projects that might be funded if additional funds became available, but did not rank them by merit. In an effort to broaden the discussion beyond those who typically comment

on draft plans, Raymond conceived and spearheaded an innovative “Imagine” campaign, which sought not only to market the LRTP vision but also to obtain citizen views on what a better transportation future might look like. The effort drew almost 70,000 responses on Metro’s website. Snoble and most others at Metro believe that this initiative played an important role in generating public interest and support. In addition, Snoble maintained an active speaking schedule; he met with the editorial boards of the region’s newspapers, including those with sub-regional foci; and he met regularly with key interest group and opinion leaders, usually joined by Raymond and sometimes by Metro’s pollsters. He found increasingly favorable responses to the idea of a fall referendum campaign.

In April the Metro Board, led by Chairman O’Connor, directed Metro’s staff to prepare for its next meeting, in June, “a comprehensive package of projects and programs” that could be funded by a 30-year, .5 percent increase in the sales tax. The Board’s directive added that this package “would include moving up” the construction schedules for projects currently in the Constrained portion of the draft LRTP and funding “the highest-performing projects” in the currently unfunded portion of the draft LRTP Strategic plan. In addition, the Board directed the staff to provide it in June with a draft ballot measure and an explanation of what would be required to get it on the November ballot.⁶²

Throughout this time, Move LA and others were bringing together key constituency groups to provide substantive and political feedback on the emerging funding plans. Most notably, Move LA, the politically powerful Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, and the Los Angeles-Orange County Building and Construction Trades Council co-convened a Labor Transportation Working Group that met every few weeks, usually at the federation’s offices. At the meetings, representatives of about 12-to-15 construction-related unions generally were joined by Zane, Metro Board Member Richard Katz; Jaime De La Vega, the city’s deputy mayor for transportation; and key Metro staff members. According to Zane, who generally ran the meetings, “the goal . . . was to make sure that the measure under discussion would have [the unions’] full support.”⁶³

Move LA also convened an Environmental/Transit Advocates Working Group that met every few weeks at the offices of Environment Now, a local environmental group. Attendees – who usually included leaders of the local chapter of the Natural Resources Defense Council and the Sierra Club, the Coalition for Clean Air, the Transit Coalition, Southern California Transit Advocates and others – usually were joined by Zane, Katz, De La Vega, and Metro staff, who would brief them about the status of the discussion and get feedback or objections. Zane, who also ran these meetings, later recalled, “Generally we were all happy because the measure was so heavily transit focused.” However, he said, NRDC ultimately did not support the final measure because (as is discussed below) it included funding for the SR-710 tunnel project.⁶⁴ In addition, the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, which had helped found Mobility 21, also convened meetings of business leaders and others about the emerging plan that Zane and other Move 21 leaders . . . were invited to attend. Recalling these and other efforts by Zane and Move LA, Snoble later noted: “Denny Zane getting into the mix was a huge boon for us.”⁶⁵

Despite this growing support Villaraigosa continued to hold back. Yaroslavsky, who was similarly keeping his options open, later recalled that they were both unwilling to join in this

effort unless reasonably confident of victory. In late spring, though, Villaraigosa had his own pollsters conduct a survey which, like separate polls at the time done for both Move LA and Metro, found about 70 percent of the voters expressing support for language summarizing the proposed ballot measure. These findings brought both Villaraigosa and Yaroslavsky into the fold. Just before the Metro's Board's June meeting Villaraigosa, who was about to become chair of the Metro Board, told *Los Angeles Times* transportation reporter Steve Hyman, "I'd like to get a sales-tax initiative on the ballot. We have to build a consensus on that first. I'm working on that as we speak."⁶⁶

Assessing Voter Support

A poll done for Metro in June 2008 found that after hearing about the projects and programs that might be funded by the tax increase, as well as arguments for and against, 66 percent of those surveyed said they would support the measure. Support was strongest in the Westside communities, Central Los Angeles, and the San Gabriel Valley where the measure drew more than 70 percent support. Support was weakest in the less dense and politically more conservative Santa Clarita and Antelope Valley areas of northern Los Angeles County where just fewer than 60 percent were favorable.⁶⁷

Building on earlier polling and focus groups showing that people were particularly interested in "local" projects that directly affected them, the new poll also assessed which policies and projects were especially popular within the county's various sub-regions. More than 75 percent of those polled in the Westside, Central Los Angeles, and the South Bay, said they were "more likely" to vote for a tax increase if it resulted in "dedicating millions of dollars to every community" in the subregion "to fund such local traffic relief projects as synchronizing traffic signals, adding left-turn lanes, fixing potholes, and improving safety at key intersections," as did more than 70 percent of those polled in the San Fernando Valley. No other policy or approach topped the 75 percent threshold, but several were over 70 percent. These included expanding regional and neighborhood bus services in the Westside, Central Los Angeles, and the San Gabriel Valley, as well as specific highway and carpool projects in the San Fernando Valley and in the San Gabriel Valley. Only two rail transit projects topped the 70 percent margin within a subregion: extending the Gold Line beyond Pasadena in the San Gabriel Valley and, in the South Bay, extending the Green Line to the airport. No policy or project topped 70 percent in the less dense and politically more conservative Santa Clarita and Antelope Valley areas of northern Los Angeles County.⁶⁸

Dividing Up the Money

At Metro's June board meeting, the staff also presented a draft spending plan, crafted to reflect both technical planning criteria and voter concerns. As Snoble later put it, "everybody had to have their slice of the pie,"⁶⁹ while Richard Katz, a Villaraigosa appointee on the board who played a major role in developing the package noted: "We tried to do it on merit but you can't always do it on merit."⁷⁰ The draft plan called for allocating the new funds as follows:

- 40 percent for new Metro rail and/or BRT projects;
- 20 percent to be distributed to localities for a mix of transit, street, bikeway and pedestrian projects;
- 15 percent to expand and operate Metro bus services (though the money could be reprogrammed for rail operations)
- 15 percent for highway projects such as widening, interchange improvements, and building HOV lanes;
- 5 percent for commuter rail investment and operations; and
- 5 percent for the operation and maintenance of new rail lines.⁷¹

The draft plan also provided significant funding for five major new rail or BRT projects that would be started in the next decade: \$4.1 billion for the Wilshire project (enough to extend the line to Westwood); \$1.4 billion for the Crenshaw corridor project; \$958 million for the Regional Connector;⁷² \$566 million for the extension of the Gold Line from Pasadena to Azusa (not, as project backers hoped, all the way to Claremont); and \$250 million for two BRT projects in the San Fernando Valley. In later years, the plan called for spending \$2.8 billion on four additional projects: \$1.3 billion to extend the Eastside Gold Line to Whittier; \$1 billion for a light rail line or BRT project in the Sepulveda Pass in the mountains that separate the San Fernando Valley from the Westside; \$200 million to connect the Green Line with the airport and \$280 million to extend the Green Line south of its current terminus in Redondo Beach. The plan also called for setting aside \$6.1 billion in new sales tax revenue as a contingency fund to cover inflationary and other cost increases. This was important because the spending plan's revenue estimates were in nominal (escalated) dollars while its estimates of the transit projects' costs were in uninflated 2008 dollars.⁷³

The plan for highways – which would be carried out by CalTrans with partial funding from Metro – was much less specific. It stated merely that virtually all of the \$6 billion in funds for highways would be used for "major highway improvements (matching funds required)," and it included a list of projects that might be partially funded from the new sales tax revenue. Of these, by far the largest was the SR-710 tunnel project. Metro also proposed that the ballot language provide for the establishment of an independent taxpayer oversight committee to regularly review and audit Metro spending, something pollsters had found would increase voter support for the proposed tax increase.

The proposal was well received by many key constituencies. Notably, in June, LA County Federation of Labor Executive Secretary-Treasurer Maria Elena Durazo, considered by some the most influential figure in Los Angeles politics,⁷⁴ hosted a joint meeting of the labor, environmental, and business working groups that had been meeting to discuss the emerging funding plan. After the meeting, Zane reported: “We found that people really [understood] the problem. The judgment for the sales tax ranged from strongly supportive to ‘We will support this if we like the final language.’ Nobody said anything discouraging. That was very good news.”⁷⁵

Despite the extensive outreach, support was by no means universal. The BRU, with support from bus employee unions, focused on the allocation of far more money to rail than bus improvements and operations. The Automobile Club of Southern California thought that highways were short-changed. This was of particular concern not only because approximately half the households in the county belonged to the organization but also because several key business groups often looked to it for guidance on transportation issues. In addition, backers of the Pasadena Gold Line extension were angered by the decision to extend the line only as far as Azusa, and some officials from the “Gateway Cities” in the southeastern portion of the county said they would oppose the tax if it did not fund enough projects in their communities. Moreover, State Senator Jenny Oropeza (D-Long Beach) indicated she would hold up the bill allowing the referendum to proceed unless the measure provided earlier and guaranteed funding to connect the Green Line with the airport. Similarly, State Senator Gil Cedillo, whose district included South Pasadena, pledged to hold up the bill unless it provided guaranteed funding for the SR-710 tunnel project.⁷⁶

Despite these objections, Metro’s board voted 9-2 to proceed toward a November sales tax referendum, instructing its staff to prepare a final proposal for its July meeting. Summing up the state of affairs, *The Los Angeles Times*’ Steve Hyman, whose articles and blog postings had become an invaluable source of information for everyone interested in transportation, wrote: “There’s time for the whole thing to fall apart” because “this is Los Angeles County and there’s tons of politics involved.”⁷⁷

Honing the Plan

Over the following month, key members of Metro’s board, senior staff and a variety of civic leaders modified the draft plan to address as many of the objections as possible. In response to concerns expressed by the automobile club and others, the plan increased the share of funding for highway projects from 15 to 20 percent. Responding to concerns expressed by the BRU and the bus workers’ unions, it raised the share of funds set aside for bus service improvements and operations from 15 to 20 percent and eliminated the provision allowing some of that money to be used in the early years for rail. (See Table 1) The board also adopted a motion by Villaraigosa to delay the planned bus fare increase for one year and to freeze fares for seniors, students, disabled persons, and Medicaid users for five years.

To fund the increased spending on highways and buses, the revised plan called for reducing “local return” from 20 to 15 percent. In addition, it reduced the funding for new rail transit projects from 40 to 35 percent of the funds, a cut of more than \$2 billion over the projected 30-year life of the sales tax increase. Moreover, based on negotiations and further analyses, the

revised plan added \$1.5 billion for several capital projects. In response to concerns about geographic equity expressed by representatives of Gateway Cities, the new plan included \$240 million for an undefined project that would run in a former rail freight corridor from the Gateway Cities to Union Station. It added \$150 million to fund the purchase of clean fuel buses, which polling had shown to be a particular favorite with voters. And in an attempt to respond to Oropeza's concerns, the revised plan called for building the Green Line airport connector earlier than had been projected in the initial plan.

Adding projects while reducing the total amount of projected revenue for transit created what Snoble called a "Sudoku funding puzzle" that had to be solved if the referendum was going to proceed. David Yale, the senior Metro executive officer responsible for long-term fiscal planning, took the lead in resolving this puzzle, ultimately producing a revised financial plan that reduced the set-aside of Measure R revenues for contingencies, including inflation, from \$6.1 billion to \$3.3 billion. The new plan also cut the allocation for the Regional Connector from \$958 million to \$160 million. It anticipated that the Regional Connector shortfall primarily would be closed by reallocating funds other than the sales tax that had previously been reserved for the Exposition Corridor project (which was slated to receive more money from the new sales tax) and by securing federal grants. Yale and Metro's legislative staff believed the Regional Connector was a particularly strong candidate for federal funding because it scored very well in relation to the Federal Transit Administration's criteria.⁷⁸

Table 1: Programs to Be Funded by Measure R⁷⁹

Program	% of Sales Tax (net of administration)	30-year amount (millions)
New Rail and/or Bus Rapid Transit Capital Projects - project definition depends on final environmental review process	35%	\$13,790
Metrolink Capital Improvements (Operations, Maintenance, and Expansion)	3%	\$1,182
Metro Rail Capital - System Improvements, Rail Yards, and Rail Cars	2%	\$788
Carpool Lanes, Highways, Goods Movement, Grade Separations, and Soundwalls	20%	\$7,880
Rail Operations (New Transit Project Operations and Maintenance)	5%	\$1,970
Bus Operations (Countywide Bus Service Operations, Maintenance, and Expansion)	20%	\$7,880
Major street resurfacing, rehabilitation and reconstruction; pothole repair; left turn signals; bikeways; pedestrian improvements; streetscapes; signal synchronization; and transit	15%	\$5,910
<i>Total Programs</i>		<i>\$39,400</i>
	1.5% for administration	\$600
Grand Total		\$40,000

While these changes won over some critics of the June plan, such as the auto club, the BRU (whose leaders declined to be interviewed for this case study) continued to oppose the measure, which they felt provided too much money for rail and road projects and not enough for buses. Katz, who had known BRU’s leaders for years, recalled that he told them:

You can't always be against everything. ... You diminish your power if you just say, “no” all the time.” ... And they would say, “Well, we're still going ahead. ... We have a constituency. We have a program. We’re going to run it this way. That's where we are.” ... They were vocal and they were loud. They sometimes seemed like they were more interested in getting press and attention than in solving problems.⁸⁰

Where the June plan had been vague about which road projects would be funded, the revised plan now listed 16 specific projects most of them in parts of the county that were not going to be served by new rail lines. Together, these projects would receive \$7.9 billion in new sales tax revenue, supplementing roughly \$14 billion planners believed would come from other sources (mainly federal and state). Summing up the overall strategy, Villaraigosa explained, “Outside of the city, they wanted more local money, and more importantly, highway money. Within the City, we wanted more public transit. So we fashioned it along those lines.”⁸¹

The funding list included several short-term projects, most of them required by the 2003 law authorizing a shorter-term sales tax, such as \$400 million toward the \$1.1 billion “Alameda

Corridor East” project that was intended to alleviate traffic in the congested rail freight corridor running from the busy ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach through the San Gabriel Valley. (See Figure 6)

Figure 6



The plan also provided significant funding for several other major highway projects, many of them still at very early stages in their planning. These included \$780 million to partially fund the multibillion dollar SR-710 tunnel between the cities of Alhambra and Pasadena in the San Gabriel Valley. In response to concerns about geographic equity, the plan now included \$170 million for “highway operational improvements” in the Arroyo Verdugo sub-region between the San Gabriel and San Fernando Valleys and \$175 million for similar improvements in the Las Virgenes/Malibu sub-region, which includes cities along SR-101 at the far western end of the San Fernando Valley as well as Malibu on the Pacific Ocean.

The Board Decides

The new plan won over some but not all of those who had questioned the June draft spending plan. Critics included County Supervisor Michael Antonovich, a fiscally conservative Republican from the northern part of the county, who charged that even with the changes:

This measure disenfranchises County voters and does not return their tax dollars in an equitable manner to invest in needed transportation infrastructure.

The Antelope and Santa Clarita Valleys will get 5 percent of new project funding, but this sub-region will expand to 11 percent of the County’s population in the next 30 years. The San Fernando Valley represents almost 15 percent of the County population, but at most it will receive 5 percent of the project funds, with two-thirds of that money tied up in a mythical 405 transit connector. The San Gabriel Valley and Gateway Cities will be shortchanged hundreds of millions of dollars in this proposal. Meanwhile the Westside Cities will receive 9 percent of the funding with only 2 percent of the County’s population.⁸²

On the other hand Brendan Huffman, president of the San Fernando Valley’s influential Valley Industry and Commerce Association, observed: “Beggars can’t be choosers.... We’ve ignored transportation and infrastructure for way too long. Now we’re playing catch-up.”⁸³ Others pointed out that the Westside was a major employment and recreational corridor (ending at ocean beaches), accounting for considerably higher proportions of regional travel than its share of regional population would suggest.

These arguments carried the day and at its July meeting Metro’s board rejected Antonovich’s motion to revise the spending plan to ensure that each region’s share of funding, from both the new sales tax revenue and contributions from higher levels of government, was roughly equal to its share of regional population. The board then voted 9-2 to approve a carefully crafted ballot measure as well as a five-point plan that along with a detailed expenditure plan would become part of the ordinance they hoped voters would approve. The two dissenters were Antonovich and John Fasana, one of four local representatives on the board, whose constituency was in the San Gabriel Valley. (Two other board members who had been critical of the plan were absent.)

Breaking the Legislative Logjam

The next immediate hurdle was getting the County of Board of Supervisors to put the measure on the November ballot. While the measure's backers believed that this vote was just a formality, in early August the Supervisors voted 3-2 against putting it on the ballot. (The three votes came from Supervisors who represented the county's outlying areas). Two days later, amid a maelstrom of controversy, Supervisor Don Knabe, whose district included Long Beach and many Gateway Cities, reversed himself, saying that while he personally opposed the measure, he would vote to place it on the November ballot because Metro had an alternative way to do so that would have cost the county an additional \$2-3 million.

Things were more challenging in Sacramento, where the bill allowing the referendum to proceed was still stalled in the State Senate. The problem was that despite the changes made to the funding plan, Oropeza and Cedillo still did not believe Metro was fully committed to their favored projects and planned at some point to reallocate money set aside for them to other projects. "In order for the bill to pass the Senate," Oropeza told Hyman, the *Los Angeles Times* transportation reporter, in early August, "it is going to have to contain the Green Line extension. Metro's leaders "understand that. They are playing a game of chicken and blaming the Legislature."⁸⁴

Three days later, at a public event in support of the ballot initiative, Villaraigosa accused the balking senators of playing pork barrel politics. "We have," he said, "provided more money for the projects that they want. What they said is they want more and we can't do that."⁸⁵

At the same event local labor leaders weighed in as well. "This is a real litmus test," stated Marvin Kropke, local chief of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. Richard Slawson, executive secretary of the Los Angeles and Orange Counties' Building & Trades Council, added, "If you're wrong you're going to suffer the consequences."⁸⁶

Metro did agree to amend the bill to include a "statement of legislative intent," reiterating that Metro supported four "high-priority projects that would receive funding from the sales tax:" the airport extension, the 710 tunnel, extending the Gold Line's Eastside branch to Norwalk or Whittier, and a package of improvements to the I-605 highway in the Gateway Cities region and the San Gabriel Valley. The revised bill also included language requiring Metro to inform the legislature before amending the expenditure plan. With these additions the measure passed in late August, but for extraneous reasons related to a general state budget impasse, was not signed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger until late September – just six weeks before Election Day.

Reflecting on the legislative struggles several years later, then-Assemblyman Feuer, who had shepherded the bill through the legislature, recalled: "It really was a multidimensional chess game because we had to negotiate with lawmakers and with key stakeholder groups. There were negotiations back and forth between Sacramento and Southern California. There were late night phone conversations with Richard [Katz] and Antonio, and others ... trying to reconcile ... competing considerations to get a measure that was as true as possible to the initial goals of Metro: to move as many people as possible in the most efficient way possible, and at the same

time, go on and raise political support to make it happen all in the teeth of a recession.” He added: “

Much of my job was to say, “This can't be simply an exercise in the politics or pork. This has to be about what, as a substantive matter on the merits, will produce the most benefit for the region. It also has to be that from the standpoint of being able, in the teeth of the recession, to get a two-thirds vote, which requires authentically presenting to the voters a package that is based on merit.”... Obviously ... everything's more complex than that. There's always trading back and forth ... [and] it was very challenging to put all that money before a legislative body and fend off attempts to redirect revenue from where it might otherwise be better spent, based on key metrics. But I think that the package that was presented to the voters was remarkably close to what objective transportation planners would say was the highest and best use of the voters' scarce dollars.⁸⁷

The Measure R Campaign

The measure's backers now turned to the campaign in support of its passage. With Barack Obama on the ballot, turnout was likely to be high even in comparison with other recent Presidential elections, particularly among lower-income and minority voters who polling and prior referenda indicated were among those most likely to favor it. However, getting voters to focus on the transportation measure would be challenging, because the ballot would include several other referenda, including one amending the state constitution to ban same-sex marriages.

Metro was forbidden by law to lobby or engage in political campaigns, but it did plan a massive informational effort to explain what Measure R would fund. Meanwhile, Villaraigosa, with assistance from Yaroslavsky, Katz, and Feuer, planned to take the lead in fundraising for the explicit political campaign on behalf of Measure R. However, in mid-September, just as they were about to start, the U.S. economy and world equity markets went into a tailspin that turned out to be the start of the “Great Recession.” Concerned about the potential consequences of this economic free-fall on support for Measure R, Yaroslavsky urged Villaraigosa to do one more poll. He recalled:

I said to Antonio, “ ... I'm concerned that the support for this has to have suffered from all of this tumult and instability in the economy and the FDIC saying if [people] have more than \$100,000 in their savings account they are not insured anymore.” ... For me, it was a visceral reaction, because it brought to real life the stories that my father would tell me about the Great Depression when the banks didn't have any money and you would go try to withdraw your money, there wasn't any money there. Those were the kinds of things that were going through my little head as a salaried public official. I could only imagine what somebody who's making a third of what I made was thinking.

So I said, “Antonio, let's — let's do one more poll, because I don't believe we can win this thing.” So we did another poll... and it came back at 66 percent. And I said, “Well, you live by the sword, you die by the sword.” ... We've got to go with the research, but I'm telling you — in my gut I didn't think it would win. ... What we were looking for was had it

dropped to 59 percent? And it not only hadn't dropped it was a point higher than we'd ever seen before. ... That's when we pulled the trigger, and we started calling our lists.⁸⁸

By late October, Villaraigosa, working with Yaroslavsky, Katz, and Feuer, had raised almost \$4 million for the campaign. Almost a quarter of that money – \$900,000 – came from a non-profit entity that has a long-standing contract to operate the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, which receives about one-third of its annual \$60 million operating budget from the county. When *The Los Angeles Times* questioned the donation, Melody Kanschat, the museum's president, emphasized that the planned Westside subway extension would include a station adjacent to the museum. She added, more generally that congestion and the lack of good connections to both highways and transit were among the top reasons people cited for not visiting the museum.⁸⁹

Other major contributors included construction-related labor unions, developers, engineering firms, and civic leaders (many of them connected to the museum). The Laborers International Union of North America gave \$200,000 as did Jerry Perenchino, former head of Univision and later a major donor to LACMA. Casden West LLC, a local development firm active on the Westside gave \$150,000, while the Carpenters-Contractors Cooperation Committee provided \$125,000. Those giving \$100,000 included AECOM, a firm that provides transportation engineering services; the Anschutz Entertainment Group, which owns the Staples Center and numerous other entertainment venues in downtown Los Angeles; Eli Broad, Los Angeles' leading philanthropist and a major donor to LACMA; and Occidental Petroleum, which has a long association with the Armand Hammer museum, which was founded by and named after the firm's former longtime CEO and principal owner and which is located near another likely stop for the Westside subway (at Wilshire and Westwood Boulevards).⁹⁰

Crafting the Advertising Campaign

In September, Metro unveiled a website focused on Measure R and mailed a 16-page, color brochure highlighting the projects to be funded by the measure to the county's 3.89 million households, at a cost of just over \$1 million. It did not, on the other hand, indicate when those projects would be built or that in most cases Measure R revenue would provide only partial funding. The brochure also avoided reference to project controversies. Thus, for example, the SR-710 gap closure project was described simply as "improvements to connections between the 710 and I-210 freeways" and the Gold Line extension beyond Pasadena was described vaguely as going from the line's "current terminus in Pasadena towards Claremont."⁹¹ Metro's legal staff was confident that the website and brochure were in conformity with the law banning Metro from taking a position on a ballot measure, but supervisors who had opposed the ballot initiative (including the two who had been absent for the actual vote to proceed) were angered by them nonetheless. Consequently, Metro dropped a plan to purchase newspaper advertisements and radio spots.

The premature conclusion of Metro's information campaign put additional pressure on the formal campaign for its adoption. Ace Smith, a respected Democratic operative who had managed Villaraigosa's 2005 mayoral campaign, had been quickly brought on to manage this effort. His principal strategy was an advertising campaign highlighting the arguments that

polling had shown to be particularly effective, especially among swing voters. This meant that none of the advertisements featured politicians or Metro personnel. A post-mortem review of the campaign prepared by Parsons Brinckerhoff concluded that, in light of opponents' assertions that the measure unfairly favored Los Angeles, "had the Mayor campaigned vigorously and visibly in support of Measure R, it may well have changed the outcome."⁹²

The campaign produced five television advertisements that mainly aired on cable television, which gave the campaign more ability to target its message. The first was an overview ad released in early October, which noted that "Measure R is a countywide plan, the most comprehensive since the 1950s." The ad went on to highlight such plan elements as: "expanded mass transit," "modernized freeways," "light rail to the airport," and "synchronizing traffic lights." It concluded, that "from big projects to potholes," Measure R was "the roadmap to traffic relief."⁹³ Three subsequent advertisements released in mid October spotlighted non-political individuals associated with trusted groups or professions to highlight issues that polling had indicated were important to swing voters. Illustratively, one featured the chair of the American Lung Association of California, who claimed that among other benefits, Measure R would "cut the rates of childhood asthma by reducing smog and air pollution."⁹⁴ In another, a UCLA professor of earthquake engineering said that by repairing the many bridges and tunnels that had been built in the 1960s, Measure R would reduce the likelihood of "devastating" damage from future earthquakes.⁹⁵

Building on Move LA's work, a wide variety of environmental, business, and labor groups now came out publicly in support of Measure R. Katz maintains that, by helping assemble such a broad coalition, Move LA "created the atmospherics that allowed people to support" Measure R because they could see that it had the support of a variety of groups and individuals they respected.⁹⁶ Measure R's backers also secured endorsements from all of the region's major newspapers, starting with *The Los Angeles Times*, by far the region's largest, in early October. *La Opinión*, the region's largest Spanish-language newspaper, soon followed. In late October *The Los Angeles Daily News*, the region's second largest newspaper, which generally focused on issues of importance to the San Fernando Valley came on board with an editorial titled: "Transit Sacrifice: Measure R Flawed, but Needed."⁹⁷

Limited Opposition

In contrast to the disciplined, and reasonably well-financed, campaign in support of Measure R, the measure's opponents – who included officials in outlying areas as well as the leaders of the Bus Riders Union – never managed to coordinate their efforts. The BRU and its allies were the most prominent opponents, contending that since Measure R did not fully fund its planned rail and highway projects, "we can only assume the difference will be made up by raiding the bus system." The BRU's anti-Measure R materials, which were part of an overall campaign focused on six different measures on the November ballot, also asserted that the many highway projects funded by Measure R would lead to "more pollution, more sickness in asthma-ridden communities of color, and more deadly greenhouse gases." Moreover, the materials contended, "the sales tax is regressive: the rich and poor have to pay the same amount – and the poor cannot afford it." Summing up their position, the BRU produced an anti-Measure R poster urging voters to "Stop Pork Barrel Politics, Stop Regressive Taxes, [and] End Transit Racism!"⁹⁸

The most salient opposition event occurred in late October. U.S. Representative Hilda Solis, a Democrat, joined Antonovich and representatives from 18 cities in the San Gabriel Valley in an anti-Measure R rally. At that event, John Fasana, a member of Metro's board who also was the mayor of Duarte (which is in the San Gabriel Valley), contended that the measure was unfair because valley residents would receive only "85 cents worth of improvements for every dollar" of new tax that they paid.⁹⁹

In early October, researchers at the RAND Corporation released a comprehensive report on transportation issues in Los Angeles that indirectly but clearly criticized many of the arguments being made in support of Measure R. The research team leaders were Paul Sorensen, an operations researcher at RAND, and Martin Wachs, a world-famous urban planning scholar who had long taught at UC Berkeley and UCLA, and who was now director of RAND's Transportation, Space, and Technology program.

While endorsing a variety of transit investments and highway improvements, and stating that these could "play an important role in improving transportation in Los Angeles," the report's central argument was that: "As a region, ... L.A.- area stakeholders must summon the political willpower to face a tough decision. Will Los Angeles begin to pursue pricing to manage demand for peak-hour automotive travel, or will it instead simply allow congestion to worsen in the coming decades? These are the only choices."¹⁰⁰ (This was, incidentally, a position with which most independent transportation analysts would agree and, as noted earlier, one that had at times been included in regional land use and transportation plans prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments.)¹⁰¹

Metro and the other supporters of Measure R, of course, had been entirely silent on the issue of highway pricing, believing it to be a political non-starter, and one that if associated in any way with Measure R would almost surely sink it. This was in spite of the fact that Metro was in the midst, with federal and state funding, of converting high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes on two major highways into high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, with variable pricing to manage demand during peak vs. non-peak periods.¹⁰² Fortunately for the Measure R campaign, the RAND report received virtually no media attention and never became part of the public discussion of Measure R. Wachs later commented, more generally, that "people are unwilling to believe that building rail won't solve congestion."¹⁰³

A few smaller newspapers based in the county's outlying areas did come out against Measure R, though none featured the RAND report. These included both the *Long Beach Press-Telegram* and *The San Gabriel Valley Tribune*. Their principal complaints were that their areas would benefit insufficiently from the investments to be financed with money raised by Measure R.

Narrowly Topping the Two-Thirds Threshold

As expected, turnout for the November 2008 election was extraordinarily high, with 82 percent of the county’s eligible voters casting ballots. To no one’s surprise, Barack Obama overwhelmingly carried the county, garnering 69.22 percent of the vote. And about 90 percent of those who voted in the Presidential election also cast a ballot on Measure R, which passed with 67.9 percent of the vote (though the outcome was in doubt for much of the night because some of the strongest support areas were among the last to report their results).

Measure R fared particularly well in three areas: the largely Latino, poorer Eastside cities and neighborhoods; the more affluent, historically liberal White enclaves on the Westside; and low-income neighborhoods in South Los Angeles (and nearby cities such as Inglewood) where more than 30 percent of the population was Black and about half were Latino.¹⁰⁴ In contrast, the measure, which was supported by at least a majority of voters in all but one locale, did least well in largely white and Asian, higher-income locales in outlying parts of the county.¹⁰⁵ (See Figure 7 and Figure 8)

Figure 7

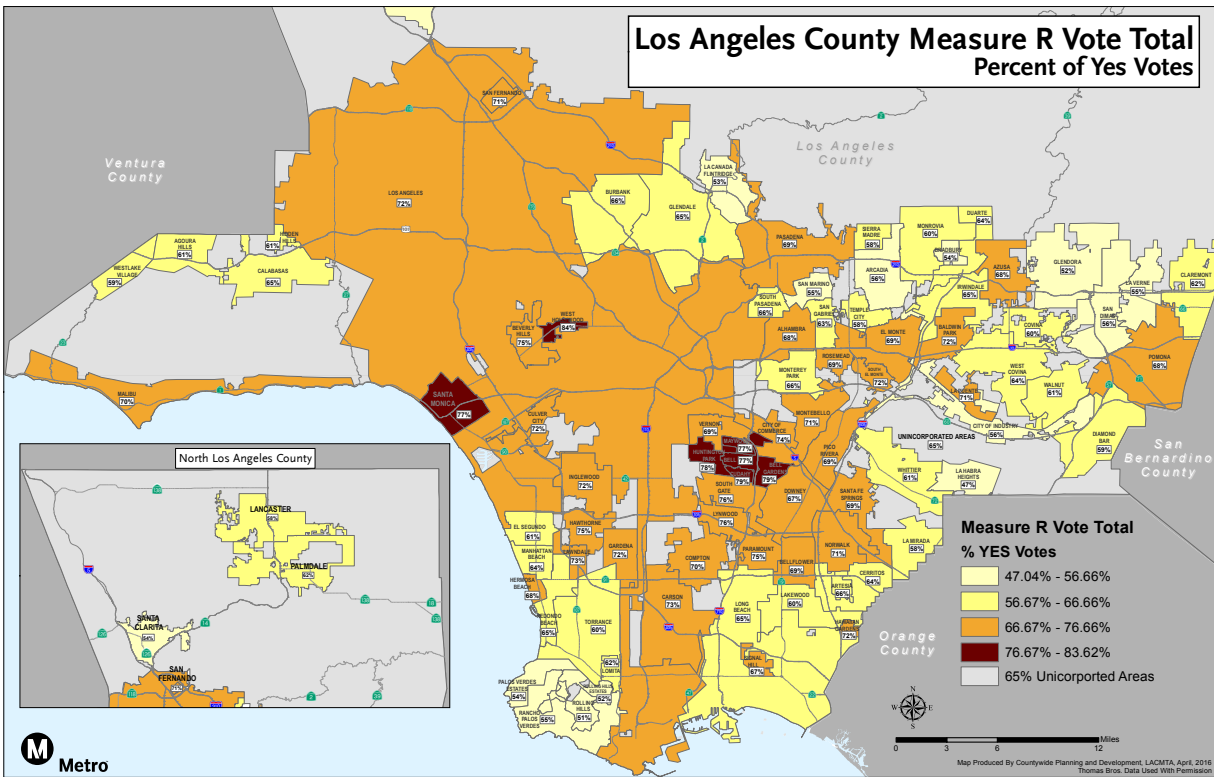
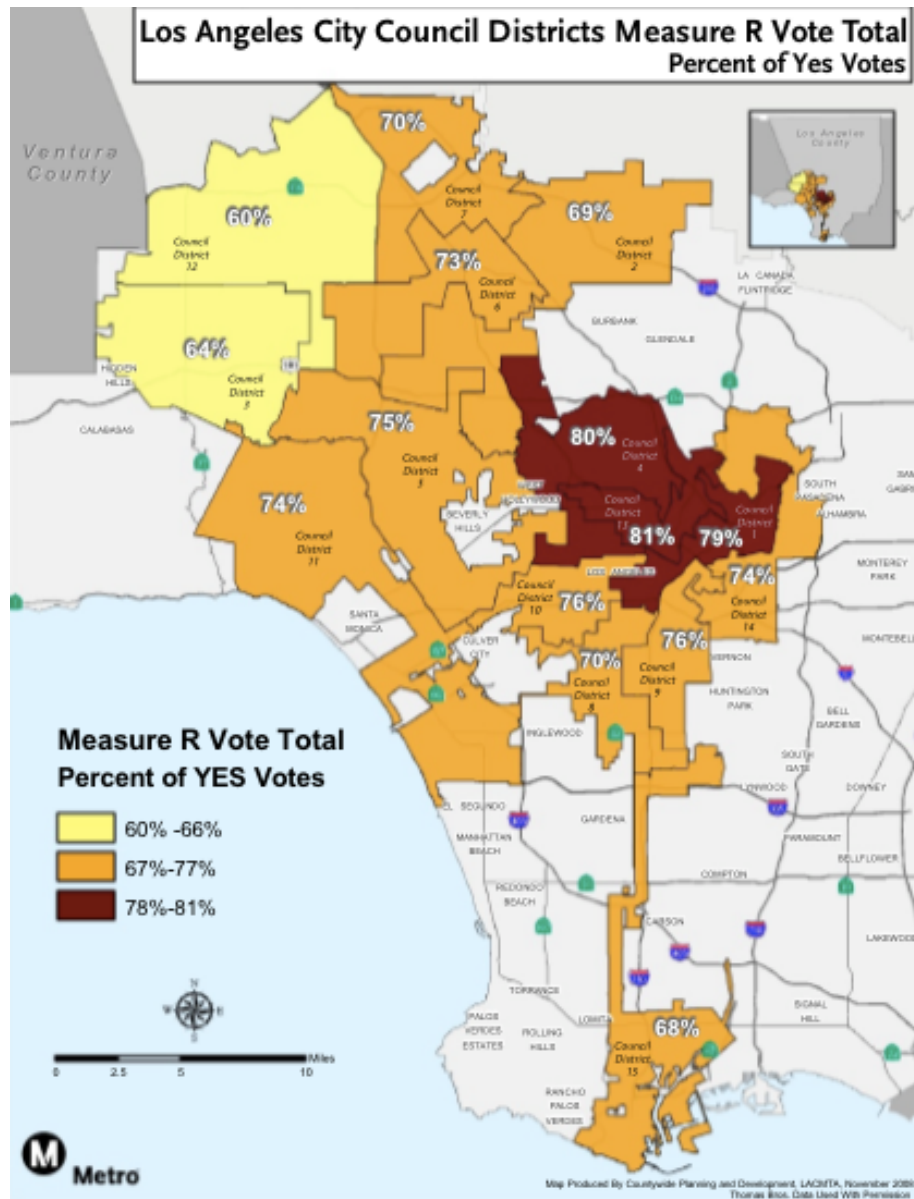


Figure 8



The victory surprised many key supporters, including Yaroslavsky, who later recalled

As a politician of 40 years of experience in this county – predating the Proposition 13 era and, living through the Proposition 13 era and all of its corollary measures – ... I do not understand how this thing passed with two-thirds of the vote. In fact, absent the [polling] research ... I wouldn't have bet my firstborn that it would have gotten 50 percent of the vote. But we went with it, and we had a very good campaign. The opposition was muted for the most part because they had no resources and we had a good message: there was something in this for every part of the county.¹⁰⁶

The measure's success was also a signature accomplishment for Villaraigosa, who was reelected to a second term and left office in 2013. Bill Boyarsky, a long-time Los Angeles political columnist, later noted that even if you believe, as some of the mayor's critics contended, that Villaraigosa had been "a political one-hit wonder who should have had a least a half a dozen big wins' ... that one hit – the transit ballot measure – was a game changing home run, even more important than the one Dodger Kirk Gibson hit in the 1988 World Series."¹⁰⁷

Implementing and Accelerating the Plan

With Measure R's passage, Metro's senior staff moved to finalize the LRTP, which had been put on hold pending the vote on Measure R. In early January, they presented board members with a new LRTP that included some revised financial projections. They noted that because Metro was legally required to spend most of its non-fare revenues on capital projects, it would have to cover a projected operating deficit by raising fares (after the one-year freeze funded by Measure R expired), cutting service, or finding other savings. Moreover, staff noted, the operating deficit underscored the importance of bringing Metro to a point where 33 percent of its operating costs would be covered by fares, a policy that would require fare hikes, which the BRU pledged to oppose.

Discussion of the capital plan also saw the return of place-based battles over funding priorities, particularly whether Metro was pushing the Wilshire subway project at the expense of other projects, most notably extending the Gold Line in the San Gabriel Valley as far as the county line but also the Crenshaw and Gold Line Eastside projects as well. The dispute revolved around the fact that financial plans for both the Wilshire subway and the Regional Connector relied on securing significant grants from the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) New Starts discretionary grants program to fund both of these projects. When they used FTA's official criteria for evaluating projects (which relied heavily on measures of cost-effectiveness) to assess all of Metro's forthcoming projects, Metro's planners found that the Regional Connector and Westside subway not only did better than any other project in the LRTP, they also compared favorably with projects from other metropolitan areas. While this assessment could help the projects advance in the early stages of the federal funding process, it did not ensure funding because Congress approves the New Starts grants. This meant that it was important for the region's congressional delegation to speak in a unified voice about which local projects they thought should receive those funds. This, in turn, required that key officials and civic leaders in Los Angeles speak in a unified voice about which projects they wanted the delegation to support.

However, the region's leaders had not done been able to do this for many years. Glendale Mayor Ara Najarian, who became chair of the Metro Board in July 2009 (replacing Villaraigosa), recalled:

We would often go to Washington to talk with our Senators and Congressmen and tell them we were pulling for a project that had some local consensus. And they would say, "that's funny, someone else from Los Angeles was here last week saying that project is junk and you should fund a different project [in Los Angeles]." At the same time, other cities like New York, or Chicago or Dallas were approaching Congress with a unified position. So a

member of Congress would ask, “Why should we deal with Los Angeles, they can’t get their act together? ... So let’s go with a winner and fund projects in other cities.”¹⁰⁸

To prevent this from happening again, Metro’s staff and supporters of the Wilshire subway and the Regional Connector asked Metro’s board to adopt a policy stating that those projects were its top priorities for New Starts funding. This proposal angered backers of the Gold Line and Crenshaw projects as well as key members of Congress whose districts included those projects. The dispute also spilled over to Metro’s Board, which now split along geographic lines.

Najarian made it clear that he would not side with either faction instead telling board members “we were shooting ourselves in the foot and the only way we were going to succeed in Washington was to have some unity and consensus on a pared-down list of what we wanted to do.”¹⁰⁹ After a heated discussion, Metro’s Board agreed in October that while the Gold Line and Crenshaw projects would not compete for New Starts funding, their backers could and should actively seek funding from other funding sources, including earmarks in a new federal transportation act, new economic stimulus programs, and new laws related to climate change that were then being actively discussed in Congress.

With this agreement in place and other issues resolved, in October 2009, Metro’s Board voted unanimously to approve the revised LRTP. With that vote, Najarian later said, “We could go to Washington with a unified board of directors, a Long Range Transportation Plan and the fact that 67 percent of the voters had agreed to tax themselves to fund other projects. That really sped things up.”¹¹⁰ Over the next few years, Metro was able to secure \$1.25 billion in federal New Starts funding for the first section of the Wilshire project (to La Cienega Boulevard) as well as \$669 million in New Starts funds for the Regional Connector. FTA has also indicated that Metro is likely to receive \$1.187 billion in New Starts funding for the second section of the Wilshire project, which will extend the line to Century City.¹¹¹ In addition, in 2012 Metro opened the 8.7-mile-long first section of the “Expo” line (to Culver City) as well as an about five-mile extension of the BRT Orange Line in the San Fernando Valley.

Trying to Speed Up the Plan

Less than a month after the Metro Board approved the LRTP, Villaraigosa called for Metro to accelerate the ambitious construction program, which, he argued would have several benefits, including creating badly needed jobs in construction, where employment reportedly had dropped by half from its peak in 2006.¹¹² To do so, he proposed that Metro borrow against future revenues from Measure R and that the federal government expand its support for state and local borrowing to finance transit projects. Over the next two years he worked to build a coalition in support of the federal grant proposal, a task that became more challenging after Republicans won control of the U.S. House of Representatives in November 2010. Ultimately, he secured the support of major labor unions, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors, of which he was vice-president in 2010-2011 and president in 2011-2012. Villaraigosa later recalled:

When I first brought [it] ... to the mayors, I didn’t get a lot of support ... because most of them wanted grants. And I had to explain to them, “Mayors, grants aren’t coming with this Congress. It’s a right-wing Congress. ... Even the Democrats aren’t voting to raise the gas

tax. There's no money. So let's get loan and bond programs that we can leverage [with] our own dollars.”

His arguments prevailed with the mayors, and he was able to secure bi-partisan support for this initiative in Congress, where it was backed by Senator Barbara Boxer, a California Democrat who chaired the Environment and Public Works Committee and Representative John Mica, a Republican who chaired the House Transportation Committee. Ultimately, while the mayor and his supporters did not get the expansive program they had sought, a two-year reauthorization of federal highway and transit programs signed by President Obama in July 2012 did increase funding for existing federal transportation loan programs from the \$122 million a year they had received FY 2012 to \$750 million in FY 2013 and \$1 billion in FY 2014. This in turn allowed the federal government to substantially increase loans provided by the program from a total of \$1.4 billion (for six projects) provided in FY 2011 and FY 2012 to \$10.5 billion in loans to 19 projects, in FY 2013 and FY 2014. Fifteen percent of these funds went to three Los Angeles County projects: \$856 million for the first section of the Wilshire subway, \$160 million for the Regional Connector, and \$546 million for the Crenshaw Corridor project.¹¹³

The Unsuccessful Effort to Extend Measure R

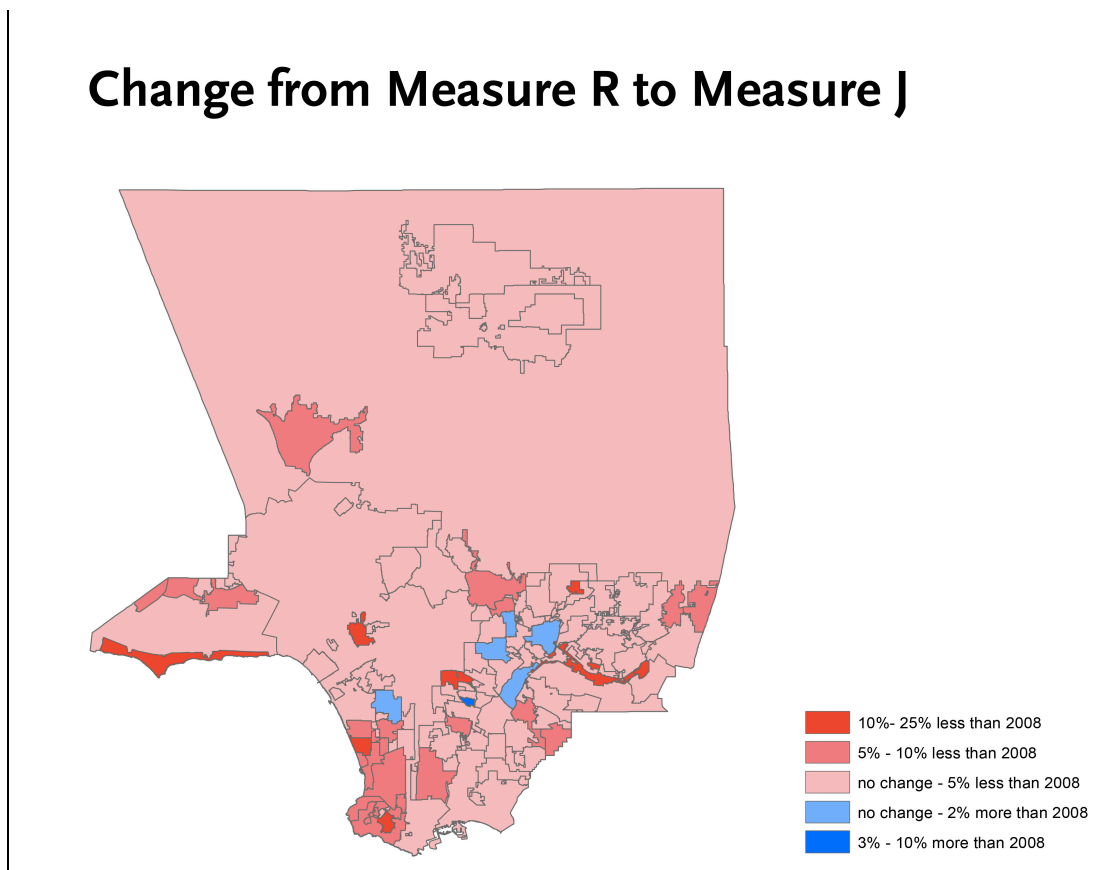
Villaraigosa and his allies on the Metro Board also decided to press for an extension of Measure R, for an additional 30 years. This would enable Metro to issue longer-term bonds, and with them accelerate project construction schedules, in some cases by as much as five years. As in 2008, of course, this would require two-thirds voter approval in a referendum. Drawing on the Measure R playbook, backers of this approach looked to the November 2012 ballot, when President Obama would be running for reelection. Moreover, before proceeding they again conducted extensive polling. Surprisingly in view of the Great Recession, the message from these polls was that more than 70 percent of likely voters would support such a ballot proposition, which officially became Measure J. (The “J” was for “jobs,” in keeping with proponents’ focus on the construction jobs they said the measure would create.)

As with Measure R, Villaraigosa led the fundraising effort, which raised about \$3.3 million, and again the major donors included civic leaders and organizations, construction-related labor unions, and construction-related firms. The county art museum, which gave \$500,000, again was the largest single donor. Eli Broad and the Los Angeles Dodgers each gave \$250,000, while \$200,000 donors included the Laborers Union; Westfield LLC, which owns major malls in Century City, Culver City and the San Fernando Valley; and the Anschutz Entertainment Group.¹¹⁴

The opponents of Measure J, largely the same as those who had opposed Measure R, such as Antonovich and the Bus Riders Union, were more active than in 2008, but only slightly so. Most significantly, they were joined by a group of Beverly Hills School Board members adamantly opposed to Metro’s plan to route the Wilshire subway directly (though also very deeply) under Beverly Hills High School. Other new opponents included the Crenshaw Subway Coalition, which wanted part of that line to be built underground and for it to include an additional station in Leimert Park Village, an area that has long been a center of Black art, music, and culture in Los Angeles; and groups opposed to the SR-710 gap project in Alhambra and South Pasadena.

Opponents such as Antonovich also made sure that Metro did not produce or mail out extensive “informational materials” this time. However, the only contribution to the opposition campaign was \$5,000 from the Labor/Community Strategy Center, the BRU’s parent organization. While Measure J was supported by 66.11 percent of the county’s voters, it just short of the 66.67 percent it needed to pass. Several factors apparently contributed to the narrow loss. Probably of greatest significance, voter turnout was lower in 2012 than 2008: down from 82 percent to 70 percent. Yaroslavsky believes that since the marginal voters were particularly likely to support transit this explains why support for Measure J was slightly lower throughout the county than it had been for Measure R. The drop-off was particularly pronounced not only in places with project controversies, notably Beverly Hills, but also in several affluent South Bay communities and that were part of a newly drawn Congressional district where long-time Representative Henry Waxman ran for reelection against retired Manhattan Beach businessman Bill Bloomfield, a former Republican turned independent who spent more than \$7 million of his own money on the campaign. While the district was overwhelmingly Democratic, Waxman, who had not previously represented many of these communities, received only 54 percent of the vote. Yaroslavsky believes that many voters attracted by Bloomfield’s message of fiscal responsibility also voted against Measure J. (See Figure 9)

Figure 9



Building Projects and Considering Another Referendum

With Measure J's defeat, Metro could not speed up construction of planned projects. However, it has continued to move forward with the plans detailed in Measure R and the LRTP.

Construction has begun on several projects, including the Wilshire subway to Westwood, which is now estimated to cost about \$7.7 billion (in nominal dollars), about \$1.4 billion more than \$6.3 billion (in nominal dollars) that Metro had estimated the project would cost a few years after Measure R was passed. (Both figures are substantially higher than the \$4.2 billion figure used in the Measure R expenditure plan, which had reported project costs in uninflated 2008 dollars).

The first of three sections, a four-mile, three-station segment projected to cost \$3.1 billion, is expected to open in 2023.¹¹⁵

Four light rail projects also are under construction. The \$1.5 billion seven-mile extension of the Expo Line from Culver City to Santa Monica and the \$741 million, 11.5 mile extension of the Gold Line to Azusa are both scheduled to open in spring of 2016. The Regional Connector, now estimated to cost \$1.5 billion, is scheduled to open in the fall of 2020. And the 8.5-mile Crenshaw Line, now estimated to cost \$2.1 billion is scheduled to open in October 2019. The other large project furthest along in design is the Eastside extension of the Gold Line, now estimated to cost about \$2.5 billion in nominal dollars, nearly twice the 2008 estimate (which was in 2008 dollars).

In addition, Metro's leadership is actively considering a new initiative, to be placed on the ballot in 2016, that would ask voters to extend the Measure R half-cent sales tax for an additional 18 years (until 2057) and/or to approve a new .5 percent sales tax for 40 years, from mid-2017 until mid-2057.¹¹⁶ Move LA, which is still headed by Zane, is pressing for such a referendum, and polling done for Metro has again indicated there is a good chance of getting two-thirds of the county's voters to support extending and/or increasing the sales tax.¹¹⁷ As of this writing, however, no decision has been made about whether to launch a referendum effort or precisely what it would fund.

It remains to be seen whether the projects funded by Measure R (and, possibly, by another referenda) will spur significant changes in land use or travel patterns, or if – as several respected critics maintained in 2008 – the realization of such changes required politically controversial policies that would make driving more expensive and to require concentrating growth in dense developments near transit nodes. As Paul Shigley, former editor of the well-respected *California Planning and Development Reporter*, observed in 2009: “Almost in spite of itself, Los Angeles has emerged as a city focused on transit. The big question now is whether L.A. can move from being a city focused on transit to a transit-oriented city.”¹¹⁸

Endnotes

¹ (Villaraigosa, A City of Purpose: Inaugural Address 2005)

² (Villaraigosa, A City of Purpose: Inaugural Address 2005)

³ (Texas Transportation Institute 2015)

⁴ Before 2008, the largest, voter-approved increase in local transportation funding since 1990 had been the \$14.3 billion generated by a .5 percentage point increase in the sales tax approved in Maricopa County, Arizona (which includes Phoenix) by a 58-42 margin in 2004. Many other such proposals had gone down to defeat altogether, such as a 2007 three-county proposal in the Seattle metropolitan area that would have raised \$18 billion, but which the voters rejected by a 45-55 margin. Sources: author's calculations from (Haas and Estrada 2011) and (Werbel and Haas 2001).

⁵ (Feuer 2015)

⁶ (U.S. Census Bureau 2012)

⁷ (Manville and Shoup 2005, 238) as cited by (Sorenson, et al. 2008, 60)

⁸ (Kneebone 2009, 8)

⁹ (Kneebone 2013, 9)

¹⁰ The share of work trips taken by transit in L.A. County was 7 percent in 1980; 6.5 percent in 1990; 6.6 percent in 2000; 7.1 percent in 2013. The figures for residents of the city of Los Angeles show a similar trend, falling from 10.8 percent in 1980 to 10.5 percent in 1990 and 10.2 percent in 2000 before rising to 11.1 percent in 2013. In contrast, while the share of New York City's residents using transit to get to work also rose between 1980 and 2013, the share fell for residents of Boston, Chicago, Dallas/Fort Worth, Miami, and Philadelphia. See (U.S. Census Bureau 2013) (U.S. Census Bureau 2013), (U.S. Census Bureau 1980), (U.S. Census Bureau 1990), and (U.S. Census Bureau 2000).

¹¹ (Fogelson 1967, 250) as cited by (Wachs, The Evolution of Transportation Policy in Los Angeles: Images of Past Policy and Future Prospects 1996, 119)

¹² For background on transportation in Los Angeles see (Bottles 1987, 122-157), (Fogelson 1967, 104-107; 176-178), (Garrett 2006, 258-383), (Richmond 2003, 11-31), and (Wachs 1996, 106-131)

¹³ See (Keith v. Volpe 1972) and (Dimento, et al. 1991)

¹⁴ For overviews of the transit debates in the 1970s see (Elkind 2014, 12-33), (Fulton 2001, 136-138), (Garrett 2006, 395-452), (Richmond 2003, 149-178), (Wachs 1996, 132-139), (Whitt 1982, 81-101) and

¹⁵ See (Elkind 2014, 81-94) and (Taylor, Kim and Gahbauer 2009)

¹⁶ Figure available online at http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DPGTL/maps/1980_proposition_a_rail_rapid_transit_system_map.jpg

¹⁷ In the unincorporated areas that make up two-thirds of the county's land area and are home to one-

¹⁷ In the unincorporated areas that make up two-thirds of the county's land area and are home to one-tenth of its residents, county government was responsible for these projects.

¹⁸ The measure won 61 percent of the vote in the city, and 68.5 percent in the city's central areas. It was also backed by a majority of the voters on the Westside, in Glendale and Pasadena, and, narrowly, in Long Beach. In general it did worst in outlying areas, like the Antelope Valley. See (Birkenshaw 1980)

¹⁹ (Garrett 2006, 481). For more on the development and early implementation of Proposition A see (Elkind 2014, 34-49) (Fulton 2001, 138-142), (Garrett 2006, 453-511) and (Richmond 2003, 178-213).

²⁰ (Snoble 2015). For more on the merger see (Elkind 2014, 50-78) (Garrett 2006, 597-609)

²¹ (Labor/Community Strategy Center n.d.)

²² (Labor/Community Strategy Center et al. vs. Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority and Joseph Drew, etc. "Plaintiffs' Revised Statement of Contentions of Fact and Law" 1996). See also (Labor/Community Strategy Center et al. vs. Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority et al. 2001)

²³ For more on the case see (Elkind 2014, 158-175), (Garrett 2006, 661-807), (Grengs 2002), (Mann 1997) and (Mann, Symposia: Radical Social Movements and the Responsibility of Progressive Intellectuals 1999).

²⁴ See (Davis 1995), (Elkind 2014) (Garrett 2006)

²⁵ See (Garrett 2006, 760-761) and (Elkind 2014, 182-184)

²⁶ Author's calculations from (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2015)

²⁷ (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2015)

²⁸ (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2001, 8)

²⁹ (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2001, 8, 11-13)

³⁰ (Mobility 21 n.d.)

³¹ (Snoble 2015)

³² (Mascaro 2003)

³³ (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2006, 14)

³⁴ (Bernstein and Liu 2005)

³⁵ (Texas Transportation Institute 2015)

³⁶ (Los Angeles Times 2005, 3-4)

³⁷ (Villaraigosa 2015)

³⁸ (Villaraigosa 2015)

³⁹ (Yale 2015)

⁴⁰ For a more detailed account, see (Elkind 2014, 202-205)

⁴¹ (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2006, 7, 12) and (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2001, 12)

⁴² (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2006, 38)

⁴³ Illustratively, 19 percent of the population growth was projected to occur in the largely rural northern parts of the county and another 16 percent was in the San Gabriel Valley, which extends east from Pasadena. However, only five percent of the projected job growth was in the northern parts of the county and only 16 percent was in the San Gabriel Valley. (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2009, 82)

⁴⁴ (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2006, 18-19)

⁴⁵ (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2006, 35)

⁴⁶ For a good overview see (National Research Council/Transportation Research Board 1994). See also (Bae 1993), (Cameron 1991), (Deakin, et al. 1996), (Giuliano 1992), (Southern California Association of Governments 1991), and (Wachs 1993).

⁴⁷ (Los Angeles Daily News Editorial Board 2007). Metro later moved forward with plans to allow solo drivers to pay a premium to use uncongested HOV lanes on the 10 and 110 highways.

⁴⁸ Projects were ranked in comparison to each other on a three-point scale. See (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2006, 43)

⁴⁹ (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2006, 39, 43)

⁵⁰ (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2006, 44)

⁵¹ (Snoble 2015)

⁵² (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2008, 23)

⁵³ (Zane 2015)

⁵⁴ (Zane 2015)

⁵⁵ (Hyman, Sales tax hike could fund subway to the sea, 2008)

⁵⁶ (Snoble 2015)

⁵⁷ (Zane 2015)

⁵⁸ (Zane, Email to the author 2015)

⁵⁹ According to its website, Move LA's supporters include the Annenberg Foundation, Bohnett Foundation, Environment Now, and the Lawrence Foundation as well as developers, engineering and construction firms, Metro and others. See (Move LA n.d.) and (Move LA n.d.)

⁶⁰ (Hyman, Sales tax hike could fund subway to the sea, 2008)

⁶¹ (Snoble 2015)

⁶² (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2008, 13)

⁶³ (Zane, Email to the author 2015)

⁶⁴ (Zane, Email to the author 2015)

⁶⁵ (Snoble 2015)

⁶⁶ (Hyman, Villaraigosa wants sales tax hike for transit 2008)

⁶⁷ (Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates 2015, 33, 35), Attachment C to (Raymond and Snoble 2008)

⁶⁸ (Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates 2015, 28-33)

⁶⁹ (Snoble 2015)

⁷⁰ (Katz 2015)

⁷¹ (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2008), Attachment A to (Raymond and Snoble 2008)

⁷² The Crenshaw and Regional Connector funding included a total of \$419 million from the revenue set aside over the long term for operating new projects, which the draft statute and ballot proposition said could be utilized for capital purposes during the first ten years.

⁷³ The use of nominal dollars for revenues and 2008 dollars for costs also meant that on first glance it appeared as if the revenues from the sales tax increase would cover almost all of the projects' total capital costs. Illustratively, the plan called for providing \$4.074 billion for the Wilshire project which is estimated would cost \$4.2 billion in 2008 dollars, which Metro later estimated, would require \$6.3 billion in nominal (year of expenditure) dollars. The difference would be covered by the money set aside for contingencies, which also included \$2.2 billion in federal funds and \$1 billion in state funds –help cover those additional nominal costs (which, in the case of the Wilshire project. See (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2008), Attachment A to (Raymond and Snoble 2008) and (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2012, 6-3)

⁷⁴ (Aron 2013)

⁷⁵ (Brasuell 2008)

⁷⁶ (Elkind 2014, 212-213)

⁷⁷ (Hymon, MTA takes first step in getting tax hike on ballot 2008)

⁷⁸ (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2008)

⁷⁹ Figure in table from (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2008)

⁸⁰ (Katz 2015)

⁸¹ (Villaraigosa 2015)

⁸² (Williams 2008)

⁸³ (Doyle 2008)

⁸⁴ (Hymon, State senator says it's LAX or bust for the tax hike bill 2008)

⁸⁵ (Hymon, Sales tax proponents ask Legislature for their support 2008)

⁸⁶ (Hymon, Sales tax proponents ask Legislature for their support 2008)

⁸⁷ (Feuer 2015)

⁸⁸ (Yaroslavsky 2015)

⁸⁹ (Hymon, Why LACMA spent \$900,000 on Measure R 2008)

⁹⁰ (Abendschein 2008) and (Hyman, LACMA gives \$400,000 more to Measure R Campaign 2008)

⁹¹ (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2008, 6, 11)

⁹² (Kassoff and Giordano 2011, 7-8)

⁹³ (Yes on Measure R Los Angeles 2008)

⁹⁴ (Yes on Measure R Los Angeles 2008)

⁹⁵ (Yes on Measure R Los Angeles 2008)

⁹⁶ (Katz 2015)

⁹⁷ (Los Angeles Daily News Editorial Board 2008)

⁹⁸ (Labor/Community Strategy Center 2008)

⁹⁹ (McLean 2008)

¹⁰⁰ (Sorenson, et al. 2008, xviii)

¹⁰¹ See, for example, (Downs 2004), (Lindsay 2006), (National Research Council/Transportation Research Board 1994), and (Winston 2010, 36-59)

¹⁰² These were a 15-mile stretch of I-110 (the Harbor Freeway) from downtown Los Angeles south to Gardena and an about 11-mile stretch of I-10 (the San Bernardino Expressway) from downtown east to El Monte.

¹⁰³ (Wachs 2015).

¹⁰⁴ The measure received more than 78 percent of the votes in seven cities and three of Los Angeles' 15 city council districts. Five of the cities – Bell, Bell Gardens, Cudahy, Huntington Park, and Maywood – are mid-sized, Eastside cities that are predominantly Hispanic, low-income communities. Similarly, two of the council districts (Districts 1 and 13), were predominantly Hispanic, low-income areas. The other two cities where the measure drew more than 78 percent of the vote were Santa Monica and West Hollywood, which are predominantly white and middle-class areas. The measure also won 80 percent of the votes in Los Angeles City Council District 4, a largely white, middle class area that includes the mid-Wilshire corridor. Measure R did almost as well in areas that were home to large numbers of Blacks and Latinos, winning 72 percent of the vote in Inglewood, a city of 110,053 people where 42 percent of the residents were non-Latino Blacks, 50 percent are Latino and median household income was \$43,460. The measure also drew more than 71 percent of the vote in the three Los Angeles City Council districts (Districts 8, 9, and 10) where more than 30 percent of the residents were Black and median incomes were low. See (U.S. Census Bureau 2010), (U.S. Census Bureau 2010), (U.S. Census Bureau 2000), (U.S. Census Bureau 2000), and (U.S. Census Bureau 2000)

¹⁰⁵ The only place where a majority of the voters did not support Measure R was La Habra Heights, at the southeastern end of the county where about 25 percent of the 5,278 residents were Latino, virtually no one was Black, 15 percent were Asian; the median household income was \$121,380; and almost no one used transit to get to work. Measure R also received less than 55 percent of the vote in five other locales. Two were outlying cities: Santa Clarita in the northern part of the county, which has 172,253 residents, and Glendora at the eastern end of the San Gabriel Valley, which has about 50,000 residents. About 28 percent of the residents of both cities were Latino; about 2 percent were Black; and about 8 percent were Asian. Median incomes were \$82,642 and \$75,954, respectively. The other three cities were all in the

South Bay west of Long Beach: Rancho Palos Verdes, a mid-sized city of 41,335 and the neighboring cities of Rolling Hills and Rolling Hills Estates, that together had less than 10,000 residents. In Rancho Palos Verdes, about 9 percent of the residents were Latino, 2 percent were black, and 29 percent were Asian. The median household income was \$114,668 and only one percent of the workers commuted by transit. In Rolling Hills and Rolling Hills Estates, more residents were White; median incomes were substantially higher; and about 1 percent of workers commuted by transit. See (U.S. Census Bureau 2010) and (U.S. Census Bureau 2010).

¹⁰⁶ (Yaroslavsky 2015)

¹⁰⁷ (Boyarsky 2015) In the 1988 World Series, star Dodger outfielder Kirk Gibson, who had not played because his legs were injured, hit a dramatic game-ending, pinch-hit home run to end Game 1. This set the stage for the Dodgers to beat the favored Oakland Athletics four games to one. (See <http://m.mlb.com/video/v3364800>)

¹⁰⁸ (Najarian 2015)

¹⁰⁹ (Najarian 2015)

¹¹⁰ (Najarian 2015)

¹¹¹ See (Federal Transit Administration 2015), (Federal Transit Administration 2015), and (Federal Transit Administration 2014)

¹¹² (Myerson 2012)

¹¹³ Author's calculations from (U.S. Department of Transportation 2015)

¹¹⁴ Those giving \$100,000 included unions representing electrical workers, ironworkers, and carpenters; Zenith Insurance, developers Casden West and AP Properties; the Kiewit Corporation (which was building a new lane on the I-405), NBC Universal, and Occidental Petroleum. See (Yes on Measure J - Committee for Jobs and Traffic Relief, a Coalition of Charitable, Business and Labor Organizations 2012), (Yes on Measure J - Committee for Jobs and Traffic Relief, a Coalition of Charitable, Business and Labor Organizations 2012), (Yes on Measure J - Committee for Jobs and Traffic Relief, a Coalition of Charitable, Business and Labor Organizations 2012), and (Yes on Measure J - Committee for Jobs and Traffic Relief, a Coalition of Charitable, Business and Labor Organizations 2013)

¹¹⁵ Current costs from (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2015); estimated costs from (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2012)

¹¹⁶ (Hymon, New details on potential ballot measure 2015)

¹¹⁷ (Nelson 2015).

¹¹⁸ (Shigley 2009)

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