

Memorandum

To: Chair and Commissioners

Date: June 16, 2008

From: JOHN F. BARNA, JR
Executive Director

File: Book Item 4.15
Information

Ref: LA METRO AB 1467 HOT LANE ELIGIBILITY AND FEDERAL URBAN PARTNERSHIP GRANT BRIEFING

ISSUE

LA Metro has applied to the Commission for an eligibility finding under AB 1467 for a High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lane proposal that would implement various aspects of the federal Urban Partnership Grant that the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) made to LA Metro in April 2008. While staff undergoes its due diligence on the eligibility request, staff believes that an overall briefing on the concept LA Metro is proposing is in order, including a discussion of what the Urban Partnership Grant entails and the timing for initial implementation. Roger Snoble, chief executive officer, LA Metro, and Doug Failing, director, Caltrans District 7 are expected to conduct the briefing.

Commission staff will be asking the Commission to take action on the finding at the July 2008 meeting.

BACKGROUND

On March 31, 2008, LA Metro applied to the Commission for an eligibility finding under AB 1467. On April 25, 2008, the U.S. Department of Transportation awarded an Urban Partnership Grant of \$213.6 million to LA Metro to implement a dynamic pricing High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lane demonstration project. LA Metro is proposing to convert existing High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes on the I-10 and I-210 freeways through the San Gabriel Valley to HOT lanes. Caltrans District 7 is a partner with LA Metro in the development and implementation of the demonstration project.

In order to secure the federal grant funding, LA Metro must demonstrate to U.S. DOT that it has enabling HOT lane legislation signed by October 15, 2008. LA Metro is in the process of seeking that legislative authorization. In addition, the federal grant requires that the demonstration projects be operational by December 2010.

While Riverside County Transportation Commission sought an eligibility finding for a HOT lane concept that resembles that of Orange County's 91 Express Lanes (four-lane, dedicated facility), LA Metro is proposing a different HOT lane approach. LA Metro proposes to convert existing HOV lanes on I-10 and I-210 to HOT lanes that facilitate greater throughput of rapid buses, vanpools, and HOVs with three or more passengers. LA Metro intends to charge a toll, dynamically priced by time of day and congestion levels, to solo drivers and HOVs with two passengers. This objective of this approach is to maximize overall throughput with enhanced transit service, while "selling" excess lane capacity to solo drivers and two-passenger vehicles willing to pay for the time savings through those two corridors.