SHERMAN OAKS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

POST OFFICE BOX 5223
SHERMAN OAKS, CALIFORNIA 91413
Information: (818) 377-4590
www.shermanoaks914.com
Email: soha914@gmail.com

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Board of Directors
LA Metro
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

Subject: SOHA UPDATED Additional Recommendation for Significant Parking at Metro Stations

Reference 1: Letter from Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association to LA Metro Board of Directors, dated March 31, 2016, *SOHA Recommendations on Metro LRTP Draft Expenditure Plan*
Reference 2: Los Angeles Metro Board Report, dated March 24, 2016, *Long-Range Transportation Plan – Draft Potential Ballot Measure Expenditure Plan*
Reference 3: National Capitol Region Transportation Planning Board, dated July 2012, *Metrorail Station Access Alternatives Study*
Reference 4: Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, dated April 1999, *Transit Service Expansion Plan*
Reference 5: Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, Final Report dated April 2008, *Station Access & Capacity Study*

The Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association (SOHA) represents 2,300 politically active families in a large, southern San Fernando Valley community that is home to the Sepulveda Pass, the infamously crowded 101 freeway, and one of the most congested street intersections in the country (Ventura and Sepulveda). SOHA is very concerned about the future of transportation in our community and the San Fernando Valley. We strongly support effective rapid transit across Los Angeles County and support Metro's efforts to ensure an equitable system countywide. In *Reference 1*, SOHA provided ten recommendations (six overarching and four Valley-specific) on Metro's draft LRTP Expenditure Plan. In this letter, SOHA provides an important eleventh overarching recommendation to provide significant parking at Metro stations.

11. Provide Significant Parking at Metro Stations – SOHA is concerned that the draft plan (*Reference 2*) includes little discussion of providing automobile parking at Metro light-rail and busway stations to meet the demands of transit passengers. We understand Metro's long-term vision for solving the "first-mile, last-mile" County transit conundrum is passengers primarily walking, biking, and bussing to stations. But, we feel that Metro is overestimating public acceptance of this solution. Lack of automobile parking will result in lower ridership – but more importantly in reduced public support for a November ballot measure. Metro must seriously consider parking as a necessary and viable adjunct to other mobility modes for accessing stations, and must discuss their short-term and long-term parking strategies in the final LRTP Expenditure Plan. Other successful transit authorities, such as the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) in Washington DC, have successfully

implemented automobile parking as part of their station access planning. LA Metro should do the same. This is particularly important for Los Angeles County, where there will be a long period during which people will learn to transition from personal to public transportation. The comparison between LA Metro and WMATA parking provides an interesting example that demonstrates the need to plan for automobile parking in LA Metro's station access mobility mix.

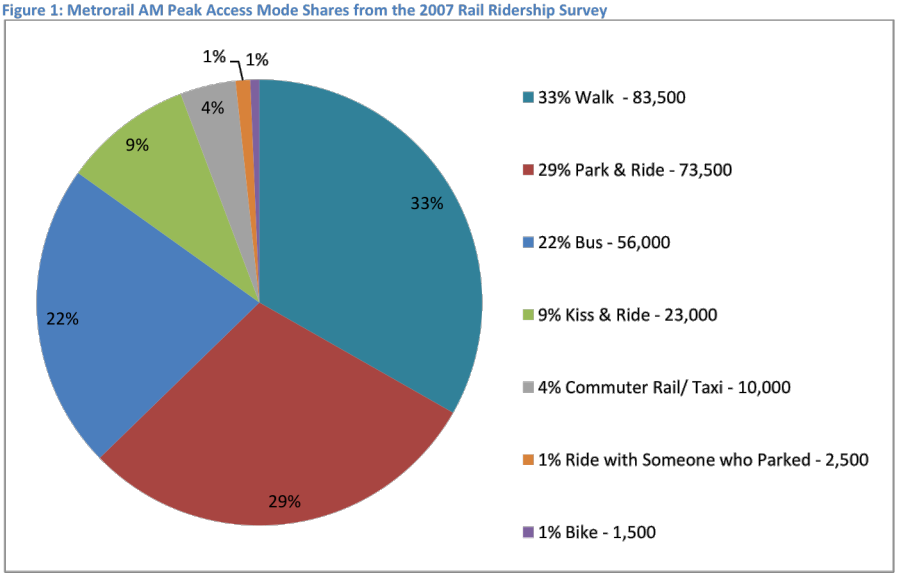
LA Metro's current system has six rail lines and will soon have 87 stations (once the Expo Line is fully open to Santa Monica). The system also includes the Valley's Orange Line busway that Metro plans to convert to light rail, with 18 additional stations. This 105-station LA system has 19,157 automobile parking spaces, as shown in the table below (from data on the Metro.net website). By comparison, the WMATA Metrorail system has six major rail lines, 86 stations, and 58,584 automobile parking spaces (*Reference 3, Table 11, page 13*).

LA Metro Rapid Transit Dedicated Parking		
Metro Line	**Spaces**	**Notes**
Red (rail)	1,797	Shares 970 spaces with Orange/Purple Lines
Blue (rail)	2,036	Shares 231 spaces with Green Line
Gold (rail)	4,029	
Green (rail)	5,699	Shares 231 spaces with Blue Line
Expo (rail)	1,606	
Purple (rail)	18	Shares 18 spaces with Red Line
Orange (busway)	5,173	Shares 952 spaces with Red Line
Minus Shared	-1,201	Deduct shared spaces counted twice
TOTAL	**19,157**	

As a specific LA Metro parking example, the Red Line subway between Union Station and North Hollywood has fourteen stations, but Metro provides parking at only three of them:
(1) Westlake/MacArthur Park with 18 spaces; (2) Universal/Studio City with 827 spaces (167 of them paid reserved); and (3) North Hollywood with 952 spaces (333 of them paid reserved). This is a total of 1,797 spaces for the entire Red Line. One of this letter's authors often uses the North Hollywood station, where free spaces are quickly filled very early in the morning, and paid reserved spaces are filled later in the morning. Supply is nowhere near meeting demand, and this severely limits Red Line usage. Other lines suffer the same minimal parking shortages.

Let's look further at the WMATA Metrorail parking situation. Ridership is strong and station access reasonably spread across multiple modes, with 29 percent comprising automobile parking ("park & ride"), as shown in the figure below (*Reference 3, Figure 1, page 20*). WMATA understands the need for automobile parking to provide a significant share of station access.

Figure 1: Metrorail AM Peak Access Mode Shares from the 2007 Rail Ridership Survey



This wasn't always the case. In the 1990s, WMATA was suffering stagnant ridership and looking for ways to increase public usage. One of this letter's authors resided in the Washington DC area from 1995 to 1999, and personally experienced the problem. WMATA had decided to focus on walking, biking, bussing, and "kiss & ride" access to its Metrorail stations, and provided little automobile parking at suburban stations. This strongly discouraged suburban station usage. For example, the major West Falls Church-VT/UVA station in Northern Virginia had fewer than 300 ground-level parking spaces (no multi-level structure) and these were quickly filled by early morning.

In the late 1990s, WMATA developed their Transit Service Expansion Plan (*Reference 4*). The plan provided four major elements necessary for expanding service. Major Element 1 was "Improve Access To and Capacity of Metrorail", and the first-priority sub-element was "Expand Metrorail Parking Where Demand Exceeds Supply" (*Reference 4, page 6*). At the time, a *Washington Post* article reported that WMATA learned that a substantial portion of the suburban public desired to, but did not use, Metrorail because they could not drive and park at stations. Potential riders wanted their cars for errands both before and after their Metrorail trips.

So, much to their credit, WMATA began a massive effort to convert ground-level parking lots to multi-level structures at their suburban and other stations. The effort was very successful and resulted in higher ridership. In their 2008 Station Access and Capacity Study (*Reference 5*), WMATA stated: "Metro presently owns and operates 58,186 parking spaces. On an average weekday, almost all of those spaces are occupied. Demand for parking will likely continue to outpace Metro's ability to provide it. If the access mode split were to remain constant, and station-area land were to develop according to MWCOG forecasts, as many as 44,000 new parking spaces could be needed by 2030." (*Reference 5, page 4*).

This capacity study included the figure below, and stated: "Figure 19 shows the predominant access mode at each existing station, based on the 2002 On-Board Metrorail Passenger Survey data." (*Reference 5, pages 37-38*). Note that the predominant access for suburban stations is auto parking ("park & ride").

Figure 19. Predominant Access Modes by Station in 2002

The 2012 WMATA capacity study provided the following table on parking utilization by station, and stated: "Metro presently owns and operates 58,186 parking spaces. On an average weekday, almost all of those spaces are occupied. … Table 12 shows parking lot utilization as of October 2006." (*Reference 5, pages 41-42*). Note that the West Falls Church-VT/UVA station in Northern Virginia now has 2,009 parking spaces that are fully utilized. These spaces were added by construction of an eight-story parking structure on the location of the previous ground-level parking lot. And monthly/daily parking fees provide an ongoing income stream, which not only can cover the cost of construction and maintenance, but also provide future revenues that encourage non-auto transportation alternatives.

Table 12. Metro Parking Lot Utilization, October 2006

Station and Region	Lot Capacity	Average Utilization[12] Mon-Thurs	Average Utilization Fri
MONTGOMERY COUNTY			
Grosvenor	1,894	103%	92%
White Flint	1,158	41%	31%
Twinbrook	1,097	84%	70%
Rockville	524	104%	101%
Shady Grove	5,467	83%	78%
Glenmont	1,781	103%	102%
Wheaton	977	63%	40%
Forest Glen	596	101%	96%
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY			
New Carrollton	3,519	98%	88%
Landover	1,866	76%	49%
Cheverly	530	97%	84%
Addison Road-Seat Pleasant	1,268	91%	71%
Capitol Heights	372	88%	82%
Greenbelt	3,399	99%	85%
College Park-U of MD	1,870	68%	64%
Prince George's Plaza	1,068	67%	60%
West Hyattsville	453	101%	102%
Southern Ave	1,980	98%	89%
Naylor Road	368	110%	107%
Suitland	1,890	100%	91%
Branch Ave	3,072	108%	106%
Morgan Boulevard	635	95%	87%
Largo Town Center	2,200	97%	87%
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA			
Deanwood	194	95%	82%
Minnesota Ave.	333	52%	44%
Rhode Island Ave.	340	95%	94%
Fort Totten	408	88%	86%
Anacostia	808	89%	71%
NORTHERN VIRGINIA			
Huntington	3,090	99%	93%
West Falls Church-VT/UVA	2,009	103%	89%
Dunn Loring-Merrifield	1,319	107%	105%
Vienna/Fairfax-GMU	5,849	100%	91%
Franconia-Springfield	5,069	96%	88%
Van Dorn Street	361	110%	118%
East Falls Church	422	117%	129%
System Total	58,186	94%	85%

So, WMATA learned by experience that automobile parking is and will continue to be a necessary and viable access mode for rapid transit stations, especially those in more suburban areas. WMATA current provides 58,186 parking spaces and plans to add about 44,000 more paces, for a total of more than 100,000 spaces. On the other hand, for its larger system (105 stations versus 87 stations), LA Metro currently provides about 19,000 parking spaces – about one-fifth as many as WMATA. And, LA Metro's draft LRTP Expenditure Plan has no discussion of parking, nor its parking strategy and plan for the future.

SOHA hopes that LA Metro will consider our recommendation for significant parking seriously, and understand that we want to help ensure passage of the new ballot measure and move forward on rapid transit for the San Fernando Valley. But, Valley and other voters by necessity must often drive to LA Metro stations. The best way to secure San Fernando Valley and other votes is ensure that stations and access transition plans support voter needs and lifestyles. These voters need to understand Metro's parking strategy for its stations – and the only way to understand the strategy is for Metro to discuss it in their final LRTP Expenditure Plan. A good strategy with multiple access modes will help secure votes, but no apparent strategy will lose votes.

Thank you. If you have any questions or desire further information, please contact Bob Anderson at BobHillsideOrdinance@roadrunner.com or 213-364-7470.

Sincerely,

Bob Anderson
Board Member
Chair, Transportation Committee
Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association

Marshall Long
Board Member
Chair, Land Use Planning Committee
Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association

cc: Mayor Eric Garcetti, Councilman Paul Krekorian, Councilman David Ryu
Senator Robert Hertzberg, Assemblyman Adrin Nazarian, Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, Former Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky