



LOS ANGELES COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION • 354 SOUTH SPRING STREET—SUITE 500, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90013 • (213) 626-0370

September 14, 1983

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**MEMO TO: RICK RICHMOND**  
**FROM: WENDELL COX**  
**SUBJECT: SERVICE ALLOCATION**

During our discussions with SCRTD, a recurring background issue has been their service allocation policy, and whether or not it should be changed. SCRTD has maintained only limited service redeployment is possible, due to the necessity of providing service coverage (the issue of "equity").

From a purely technical perspective, the present overcrowding could be easily eliminated by reallocation of service from under-utilized lines, but that would violate the SCRTD service allocation policy. SCRTD President Mike Lewis alluded to the necessity of looking at all services in the county on an equal basis, suggesting that LACTC should review service utilization on all lines, regardless of operator. As 1985-86 approaches, and as we consider alternatives for commitment of the 40% discretionary Proposition A funds, this issue is likely to arise over and over again.

With that in mind, it is important that we review the state of service allocation in the county, and consider alternatives for the future.

First of all, there is a basic problem with the present SCRTD service allocation policy. That defect is that it is oriented not toward consumer service, but rather toward the return of service resource to communities (sectors) based upon a formula. It is stated in terms of headways based upon population densities, and bus miles per jurisdiction. By being thusly based, SCRTD can contend

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that each area is receiving service "equity." The basic problem with this approach is that areas or sectors do not ride transit service, people do. What is needed is a consumer orientation, a policy stated in terms of what the consumer can expect. There is a subtle, yet important difference between these two approaches.

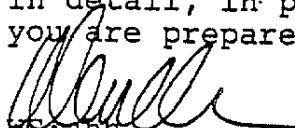
A consumer orientation would include the elements of the present SCRTD policy, service frequency and service coverage, but it would also include a crucial additional issue, that of service convenience (how long it takes to make a trip of a certain distance). The present policy is concerned only with the existence of service in an area, and not with how a particular bus line interfaces with the rest of the system. As funding becomes tighter, and as service frequencies are retarded, transfers become longer and longer, and service less convenient. Having a trip time standard would create incentives to design the system, first of all as a system, and secondly as more convenient for the user. This is especially critical in low demand areas, where "policy level" service is the rule.

Rather than having a service allocation policy, LACTC ought to adopt a Transit User's Bill of Rights, which would include the issues of frequency, coverage and trip time. Beyond the basic service level ("policy service"), service would be allocated in response to demand. A consumer oriented policy properly identifies the objective as service to the transit user, rather than a "return to source" objective. The equity question is thus more appropriately phrased in terms of whether or not the basic guaranteed level of service is sufficient, rather than whether a sector or area is receiving enough of its tax funds in return. Furthermore, such a policy should be "mode-blind", that is, access to the public transportation system would be guaranteed, whether that access was to general purpose dial-a-ride, bus, rail or any other appropriate mode.

I am attaching a copy of a "Mobility Policy" which I have drafted. The standards contained in this draft are only for purposes of illustration. This is an attempt to suggest how such a consumer oriented policy might be fashioned. Such a policy could be used by LACTC (in 1985-86 and later) to define what services would be supported by subsidies under its control (from all sources, Federal, state and local).

We must recognize that only LACTC is in a position to make the tough allocation decisions, and that with the funding shortages ahead, we cannot any longer enjoy the luxury of presuming that the amalgam of all operator plans can be funded.

I believe that LACTC staff should begin to review this issue in detail, in preparation for 1985-86. Please let me know when you are prepared to discuss this.

  
WR:amh  
Attachment

PROPOSED

LOS ANGELES COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY POLICY

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NOTE: *The figures used in this draft are shown for illustration purposes only. The actual figures used in such a policy could be significantly different.*

PROPOSED LACTC  
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY POLICY

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The LACTC shall fund a basic public transportation system in urbanized Los Angeles County south of the San Gabriel/Santa Susanna Mountain, the purpose of which is to provide a base-line level of service to the entire region.

The LACTC shall fund additional services and increments of service as are justified by patronage levels. The purpose of this additional service is to maximize public transportation patronage.

BASIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The basic public transportation system shall include either fixed route or general demand responsive service meeting the criteria below:

1. Public transportation service shall be available within one-half mile of 95% of the businesses and residences (Note 1).
2. Public transportation service shall be available within one hour during the hours of 7 a.m. - 6 p.m. weekdays.
3. Public transportation trips shall facilitate the movement of patrons within 60 minutes to within one-half mile of 95% of the urbanized area within a seven mile radius of the original embarkation point (Note 2).

The LACTC shall encourage the utilization of service modes which are appropriate for the demand and which maximize consumed public transportation service within funding constraints.

## NOTES

- (1) The 95% figure is used to avoid costly services to relatively remote areas, such as hillside areas.
- (2) Geographical barriers, on the scale of the Santa Monica Mountain would limit the seven mile radius.

TYPICAL SERVICE MODESWEEKDAY

High Demand

Fixed Route - Demand Level

Medium Demand

Fixex Route - Basic Level

Low Demand

Demand Responsive\*

WEEKEND/HOLIDAY/EVENING

High/Medium Demand

Fixed Route - Demand Level

Low Demand

Demand Responsive

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\* Dial-A-Ride, Shared Ride Taxi, User Side Subsidies Taxi

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