



THE TRANSIT LINE from Sherman Oaks to the Westside would be an alternative to the busy 405 Freeway.

Metro to dig rail tunnel in Sepulveda Pass

New transit line needs billions in funding, so a timeline for completion is unclear.

By COLLEEN SHALBY

The Sepulveda Transit Corridor project would connect the Westside to the San Fernando Valley in less than 20 minutes and ideally eliminate traffic congestion along one of the nation's busiest corridors by offering an alternative to the snarling 405 Freeway over the Santa Monica Mountains.

The multibillion-dollar Metro plan is considered one of the most significant transit projects in the country — and is finally moving forward after years of debate. But billions of dollars have yet to be secured, raising questions over its timeline.

Metro's board of directors unanimously approved an underground heavy-rail option Thursday that would go from Van Nuys to Sherman Oaks, pass under the mountains and Bel-Air, stop at UCLA and ultimately end at the E Line's Expo/Sepulveda Station. The option, which was pushed forward by Metro's planning and programming committee last week, eliminates a controversial monorail proposal through the Sepulveda Pass and bypasses a stop at the Getty Center, which had been under consideration.

"The Sepulveda Corridor is a vital link between the communities of Greater Los Angeles, connecting residents of San Fernando Valley to the Westside's bustling entertainment and employment hubs and cultural landmarks," Cecily Way, sen-

ior executive officer of countywide planning for Metro, said during Thursday's meeting. "The Sepulveda Transit Corridor project would add a critical regional connection to the transportation network."

The project has been the subject of multiple Metro community meetings and has elicited thousands of public comments for and against various proposals. Some routes faced extensive pushback from local residents concerned about neighborhood disruptions and environmental risks. On Thursday, public comment was overwhelmingly supportive of the project, and the board's decision drew cheers.

The current route would travel under Van Nuys Boulevard. It pulls from two other proposals and was developed after residents voiced concerns over a route that would drill near a high-pressure water main along Sepulveda Boulevard.

Bob Anderson, the vice president of the Sherman Oaks Home Owners Assn. and a retired aerospace engineer, was "pleasantly surprised" that Metro took residents' concerns into consideration with the proposal.

The group has been a vocal critic of some of the proposed routes and still has questions about the current proposal, such as how it will affect parts of Sherman Oaks and Bel-Air. Anderson said that although the association supports the current recommendation, he still has concerns about funding.

"We still have not heard from Metro how they're going to pay for this thing," he said. "We don't need to know [See Tunnel, A6]"

MEMO EXPANDS AGENTS' POWER

ICE directive allows forcible entry into a residence without a judicial warrant.

By ANDREA CASTILLO

WASHINGTON — Democratic lawmakers and constitutional rights experts expressed outrage after reports that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials had written a memo stating that deportation agents are allowed to enter immigrants' homes — by force, if necessary — without a judicial arrest warrant.

The internal memo authorizes ICE agents to forcibly enter a residence to arrest someone as long as the agents have an administrative warrant with a final deportation order.

Administrative warrants are internal documents issued by immigration authorities and are not signed by judges. Arrest warrants are court orders based on probable cause that a crime has been committed.

Government critics say the memo, first obtained by the Associated Press, represents a reversal of long-standing guidance that aimed to adhere to constitutional limits on government searches.

Immigrants have long been advised not to open their doors to agents unless they see a warrant signed by a judge.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.), a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, demanded an investigation into the new policy, which he said should "appall every American."

Blumenthal, expressing his concerns in a letter Wednesday to Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem and acting ICE Director Todd Lyons, said the guidance constituted a "flagrant disregard for the lawful protections that have safeguarded the American public and our democracy for the last 250 years."

Trump administration officials, including Vice President JD Vance, on Thursday defended the guidance as appropriate and legal.

WhistleblowerAid.org, an advocacy group, submitted a complaint to the U.S. Senate over the memo's guidance this week and released a copy of the May 12, 2025, memo. The memo appeared to be signed by Lyons, though his signature could not be independently verified.

The whistleblower group's complaint was based on information pro-

[See Warrants, A5]

Weary Greenlanders don't trust Trump's word

He walked back threat, but the damage has been done

By Michael Wilner

NUUK, Greenland — The sun had barely crept above the ice sheet in Greenland, so far north in the middle of winter, when President Trump began his remarks midday. But Jinny Holm was not going to miss it.

She turns on the television every morning these days, keeping it on in the background, monitoring the developments of a foreign leader who otherwise would matter little in her life if not for his fixation on conquering her ancient homeland.

"My son, he has been a little bit worried about this military, so I have been

talking to him — 'Don't worry. He cannot buy us,' " said Holm, a caregiver, describing her 9-year-old. "So that's really good, that he said he will not use military force."

Addressing an annual economic forum in Davos, Switzerland, Trump walked back threats to use military force to annex the semiautonomous Danish territory — news that was received with overwhelming relief here. Yet few trust Trump enough to take him at his word on any given day.

"I don't want to be American, because I am Inuit," she continued. "I am born [See Greenland, A5]"

LAFD turned to stars' PR firm after fire

Donations for safety efforts after Palisades blaze were used to hone agency messaging.

By ALENE TCHEKMEKYAN AND PAUL PRINGLE

In the months after the Palisades fire, the Los Angeles Fire Department Foundation raked in millions of dollars in charitable donations to pay for training and equipment for firefighters, as LAFD leaders publicly complained about not hav-



MYUNG J. CHUN Los Angeles Times

A TATTERED FLAG waves above Pacific Palisades, where destruction from last January's fire remains.

ing enough money to keep the city safe.

But some of the funds were quietly spent on something that had little to do with firefighting: a celebrity public relations firm to help LAFD leaders shape their messaging after a disaster in which their missteps figured prominently, The Times learned.

Neither the LAFD nor the foundation would say how much the charity paid the Lede Company, whose clients include Reese Witherspoon and Charlize Theron, and what exactly the firm did for the depart-

[See PR firm, A6]

State Bar is probing DTLA law firm

By REBECCA ELLIS

The State Bar of California opened an investigation into a prominent Los Angeles law firm that represents thousands of sex abuse victims in a record \$4-billion settlement, according to court filings made public Wednesday.

The investigation into Downtown LA Law Group, which is also the subject of a criminal probe into allegations plaintiffs were paid to sue, was detailed in a Tuesday court motion filed by attorneys for L.A. County. The county agreed last spring to the historic payout to settle thousands of claims of sex abuse inside juvenile halls and foster homes.

The latest court filing by the county asks Superior Court Judge Lawrence Riff for permission to give the State Bar confidential case documents related to sex abuse clients represented by Downtown LA Law Group, or DTLA. The county said the State Bar subpoenaed the documents as part of its ongoing probe into the firm.

The county included a series of Times investigations as exhibits, citing reporting that found nine clients represented by the firm who said they were paid by recruiters to sue the county. Four said they were told to make up their claims of abuse.

The firm has denied all wrongdoing and said it "categorically does not engage in, nor has it ever condoned, the exchange of money for client retention."

DTLA did not directly address an inquiry into whether it planned to fight the request.

[See Law firm, A7]

New chilling effect on television, radio

FCC chief's call for equal time for politicians could stifle broadcasters' speech.

By STEPHEN BATTAGLIO

Back in 1963, Richard Nixon needed to rehabilitate his image after he lost his race for California governor. He went on the "Tonight" show with Jack Paar and played the piano.

Bill Clinton's appearance on "The Arsenio Hall Show," where he delivered a rendition of "Heartbreak Hotel" on the saxophone, was considered a breakthrough moment in his successful 1992 campaign for the White House.

Those memorable segments demonstrated how the desk-and-sofa format could be a tool in the politician's arsenal for shaping public opinion away from the pesky probing of journalists. It became a way to reach viewers who did not

regularly watch TV news.

But those days may become a relic of broadcast history as Federal Communications Commission Chair Brendan Carr is calling for stronger enforcement of a broadcast regulation rule requiring TV and radio broadcasters to offer equal time to all legally qualified opposing political candidates.

With the new guidance — which legal and media experts said would be hard to enforce and could stifle free speech — the FCC questioned whether late-night and daytime talk shows deserve an exemption from the equal-time rules for broadcast stations using the public airwaves.

It's the Trump White House's latest salvo against the network late-night talk show hosts, primarily Stephen Colbert, Seth Meyers and Jimmy Kimmel, who pound away at President Trump nightly in their monologues and offer ample airtime to his political oppo-

[See FCC, A12]



BEXX FRANCOIS For The Times

Ryan Coogler, center, and his team racked up a record 16 nods for "Sinners." Paul Thomas Anderson's "One Battle After Another" has 13. For snubs and surprises, see ENTERTAINMENT, E1

Smith defends Trump inquiry

"We followed the facts" in Jan. 6 investigation, former special counsel testifies. NATION, A4

Weather Periods of sun. L.A. Basin: 66/53. B6

VA's tiny home plan is criticized

Sheds are a woefully unsuitable housing fix, vets say. CALIFORNIA, B1



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