



# METRO'S RECOVERY TASK FORCE



November 2020

Draft Final Recommendations



Metro

# The challenges we are facing

---

- > COVID-19 still not under control
- > Significant racial and economic disparities persist
- > Unemployment in LA County is 4x higher than in 2019
- > Countywide spending is currently down by 13% from 2019
- > Metro's FY21 budget is 16% lower than FY20;  
capital budget is 1/3 lower
- > Vehicle traffic is returning faster than transit ridership
- > Vehicle purchases are rising

# Now is the time to act

---

- > Metro has been responsive in adjusting to the pandemic and our financial situation is better than many transportation agencies
- > If transit ridership stays low, car ownership rises and capital transit projects are slowed, congestion will return with greater force
- > Transportation in LA County was already highly inequitable prior to the pandemic and these inequities are being exacerbated
- > The Recovery Task Force developed recommendations to help Metro and LA County combat these negative outcomes and to emerge with better mobility and more equity than we had prior to this crisis

# Task Force Goals

---

- > Respond to the pandemic
- > Recover after the pandemic
- > Lead an equitable economic recovery for LA County
- > Advance mobility without congestion as the 'new normal' after the pandemic



# Draft Recommendations

The task force identified 20 timely early action items to help Metro respond and prepare for recovery.

These additional 17 recommendations build upon existing initiatives and are meant to:

1. Improve mobility and advance equity in LA County
2. Help pay for these improvements





# Recommendations

**For better mobility  
and equity**



Metro®

# New and Improved Services

---

- > **Run express buses on improved HOV & express lanes**
- > **Accelerate networks of complete streets**
- > **Fully integrate transit in the LA region**
- > **Offer incentives to reduce car ownership**
- > **Improve station amenities**

# New and Improved Services

---

## Run express buses on improved HOV & express lanes

*Benefits:* New express bus routes, faster HOV lanes, more express lanes.

*Draft Recommendation:* Work with Caltrans to review minimum occupancy requirements on select HOV lanes and run express buses on these lanes; explore ways to rapidly implement more express lanes.

### *Implementation:*

- Metro Highways and Congestion Reduction team will work with Caltrans to identify potential pilot corridor(s) and strategies
- Operations will consider point-to-point express bus options for pilot corridor(s)
- Government Relations will work with Highways and Congestion Reduction on any legislation needed to change HOV requirements or allow express lane pilots

# New and Improved Services

---

## Accelerate networks of complete streets

*Benefits:* Faster buses, safer and more comfortable bus stops, more pedestrian space/priority, protected bike lanes.

*Draft Recommendation:* More partnerships to improve streets, such as expanding LA Metro Speed and Reliability Working Group to other cities; collaborating on master plan of LA County arterials; and exploring innovative ways to plan and implement complete streets projects.

### *Implementation:*

- Better Bus Working group for bus prioritization partnerships and expanding bus stop amenities
- Planning Dept to layer existing and new plans to show areas where complete street improvements should be prioritized
- Planning, Program Management and OEI to explore innovative planning and project delivery collaborations

# New and Improved Services

---

## Fully integrate transit in the LA region

*Benefits:* Easy transfers and trip planning, one map and one pass for all transit providers in region.

*Draft Recommendation:* Build upon coordination with partner transit agencies to give riders more service, convenient transfers, one fare (or fareless) structure.

### *Implementation:*

- Convene general managers of regional transportation agencies and interdepartmental Metro group, including Operations, Planning, Congestion Reductions (RIITS, LA SAFE) to lead planning of integration
- Conduct scan of current practices, plan for regularization followed by seamless integration
- Coordinate with Fareless System Initiative Task Force and TAP

# New and Improved Services

---

## Offer incentives to reduce car ownership

*Benefits:* Support for residents who want to stay/become car-free or car-light; avoid post-COVID surge in car ownership, congestion and air pollution.

*Draft Recommendation:* Provide incentives like free transit passes, mobility wallets and vouchers for bikes or e-bikes to car-free or car-light households.

### *Implementation:*

- OEI and Planning to analyze and identify package of incentives, learning from travel-rewards pilot and surveys.
- Develop final proposal

# New and Improved Services

---

## Improve station amenities

*Benefits:* Better customer experience and higher ridership.

*Draft Recommendation:* Test more amenities and partnerships at a Metro station, including more retail, bathrooms at the surface level, technology that helps customers easily use the system; expand those that work to other stations.

### *Implementation:*

- Planning, OEI, Operations, Test Station Working Group, OCEO (Customer Experience), Communications (Art & Design) and Station Evaluation Program Team to identify and test potential amenities using surveys, RFIs, pilots and customer feedback
- Planning and Operations to implement amenities more broadly based on test station pilots
- Better Bus working group to lead tests of and encourage implementation of bus stop amenities



**Metro**



# Responsive Metro

- > Improve public engagement and strengthen rider voices
- > Gather more data on equity and travel patterns
- > Be more transparent

# Responsive Metro

---

## Improve public engagement and strengthen rider voices

*Benefits:* Prioritize the insights and needs of our riders and historically marginalized people, which will help improve service and project design.

*Draft Recommendation:* Foster public engagement with those most impacted by our decisions, covering all major products, services and policies; increase customer research

### *Implementation:*

- Led by Community Relations, with Public Relations, Marketing, Government Relations, and Customer Care units, Office of Civil Rights & Inclusion and OCEO (Customer Experience and Equity and Race)
- Tasks include using metrics to ensure that we are reaching the most impacted stakeholders; strengthening the role of the CAC and rider voices; documenting outreach and feedback on Board reports; overhaul agency website UX/UI; and building upon the Metro Art program by employing creative arts and cultural strategies.

# Responsive Metro

---

## Gather more data on equity and travel patterns

*Benefits:* Use data on demographics and travel patterns to target services and investments to advance equity and improve service.

*Draft Recommendation:* Increase the collection, management and publication of data based on race and gender, income, limited English proficiency, and ability across Metro's programs and services; purchase travel pattern data in collaboration with RIITS to help with service planning and to baseline and track progress towards Vision 2028 goals.

### *Implementation:*

- OCEO (Equity and Race), ITS and OCR will identify current demographic data collected by Metro and plans and standards to gather more.
- Congestion Reduction will purchase travel data through RIITS, with demographic data where possible, and make it available to Metro and partner agencies
- OCEO and ITS will develop dashboard and analytic tools



# Responsive Metro

---

## Be more transparent

*Benefits:* Build public trust and internal planning and operations by making more Metro information and data more open and accessible.

*Draft Recommendation:* Make Metro data and information more open and accessible by developing and implementing an Agency Data Governance policy; using a digital asset management system to organize data; and publishing datasets to a central repository using a standardized, machine-readable format.

### *Implementation:*

- ITS, Records Management Center and Board Relations, Policy & Research will work with departments to inventory existing data and current projects; and pilot and adopt new systems to improve information management and enable a clean central data repository and public open-data platform.



# Vibrant Future

- > Accelerate joint development and transit-oriented communities
- > Expand region's broadband infrastructure
- > Create green jobs and green infrastructure
- > Reimagine Destination Discounts

# Vibrant Future

---

## Accelerate joint development and transit-oriented communities

*Benefits:* Let more people live, work and shop near transit; expand affordable housing.

*Draft Recommendation:* Adopt updated Joint Development policy to streamline the equitable delivery of new housing around transit and set targets for more joint development; partner to increase transit supportive plans, policies and programs.

### *Implementation:*

- JD Policy updates led by Planning with OCEO (Equity and Race) and OEI
- TOC Implementation led by Planning with Communications, Government Relations, OEI, OCEO (Equity and Race) and Program Management

# Vibrant Future

---

## Expand region's broadband infrastructure

*Benefits:* Expanding broadband infrastructure can strengthen LA County and reduce disparities by helping with telework, remote education and e-commerce. Metro operations and customer-facing services can also benefit from better high-speed internet.

*Draft Recommendation:* Explore benefits, costs and methods of partnering in high-speed internet infrastructure in LA County.

### *Implementation:*

- Operations, ITS, Congestion Reduction, Facilities Maintenance, Planning (Real Estate), and OEI to investigate feasibility
- Pending feasibility, draft RFP to potential carriers for partnerships to utilize Metro assets to expand digital network
- Report back to OCEO and Board on proposals received

# Vibrant Future

---

## Create green jobs and green infrastructure

*Benefits:* More jobs, less pollution, more reliable energy and water supplies.

*Draft Recommendation:* Create green jobs by partnering with utilities and other local agencies on sustainable energy and water infrastructure projects.

### *Implementation:*

- Environmental Compliance & Sustainability Department (ECSD) will explore projects and partnerships with input from Program Management, Planning, Operations and OEI
- ECSD will lead data management around emissions reductions
- Operations will lead links to Zero Emissions bus program

# Vibrant Future

---

## Reimagine Destination Discounts

*Benefits:* Helps rebuild ridership and keeps areas and destinations around Metro stops and stations vibrant and healthy after being impacted by COVID-19 economic conditions.

*Draft Recommendation:* Promote taking Metro to culturally diverse events, venues, and shopping easily accessible by Metro

### *Implementation:*

- Communications (Public Relations) to lead plan to relaunch and expand program after LA County reopens
- Work with OCEO (Equity and Race) to explore alternative tactics to attract local, small and minority-owned partner destinations; with County Counsel on rules for promoting and listing destinations; and Customer Insight & Strategy team on focus groups/surveys to test new program features.



**Recommendations**

**To pay for improvements**



**Metro**



# Save Money

- > Study reducing capital construction costs
- > Build staff capacity
- > Use Measure R + M ordinances

# Save Money

---

## Study reducing capital construction costs

*Benefits:* New transit lines potentially built quicker, more jobs, increased accessibility and service to more customers, and achievement of greater connectivity.

*Draft Recommendation:* Further develop and implement cost savings and cost reduction measures currently underway and identify and implement new cost reduction strategies which will, at a minimum, enhance transit expansion without harming customer experience and safety.

### *Implementation:*

- Perform an internal Capital Cost Reduction Strategy Study led by Program Management in collaboration with Planning, OEI, V/CM and other departments as needed.
- Study will develop recommendations for presentation to SLT, CEO and the Board of Directors.

# Save Money

---

## Build staff capacity

*Benefits:* Expanded internal staff capacity can bring improvements to services and programs.

*Draft Recommendation:* Pursue savings by utilizing existing staff to perform core agency functions and build expertise where needed, while maintaining use of consultants for specialized tasks, surges in work or when there is specific benefit.

### *Implementation:\**

- Departments will analyze their staffing and use of consultants to achieve best outcomes and seek savings
- Departments will be supported by HC&D (skill development and hiring), OMB (funding), and V/CM (procuring consultants) as necessary.

*\*have not identified lead dept*

# Save Money

---

## Use Measures M + R ordinances

*Benefits:* Help fund critical mobility improvements to respond to pandemic .

*Draft Recommendation:* Consider the potential benefits of amendments\* allowed under funding ordinances:

- Use of subfunds, building upon work of Highway Reform working group
- Local return guidelines to enable jurisdictions to more rapidly respond to pandemic with mobility improvements.

\* *Note that some amendments are prohibited by the Measures:*

- No transfer of funds between subregions
- No transfer of funds between subfunds
- No project acceleration that would negatively impact other projects

*Implementation:*

- OCEO to lead consideration of potential amendments with Planning, Operations, OEI, OMB and Program Management departments and input from subregions and board offices.



**Metro**



# New Revenue

- > Expand commercial and lease revenue
- > Identify incentives to reduce car ownership

# New Revenue

---

## Expand commercial and lease revenue

*Benefits:* funding for more service; customer experience improvements like bus stop amenities; and community investments like affordable housing and safe streets.

*Draft Recommendation:* Expand transit advertising, digital billboards, sponsorships and retail; Explore leasing more property for joint development, energy generation and wireless.

### *Implementation:*

- Led by Communications and Planning departments in collaboration with other relevant departments
- Update Metro's asset inventory; research/baseline potential revenue sources; issue RFIs to determine market support for revenue strategies; and plan and implement promising strategies

# New Revenue

---

## Identify funding for incentives to reduce car ownership

*Benefits:* Fund fast, frequent buses and incentives for less car ownership to avoid post-COVID surge in car ownership, congestion and air pollution.

*Draft Recommendation:* Explore revenue sources, including federal and state funding and/or fees with low-income exemption, to fund transit and incentives to car-free/car-light households.

### *Implementation:*

- Led by OEI in partnership with Government Relations, with assistance from Planning
- Research potential revenue sources and develop recommendations



# Contact Us

We welcome questions about our work, reactions to our initial recommendations and your ideas for how Metro can recover.

[metro.net/recovery](https://metro.net/recovery)

[Covid19recovery@metro.net](mailto:Covid19recovery@metro.net)



**Metro**