



First/Last Mile: A Community-Based Process and Plan

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Metro®

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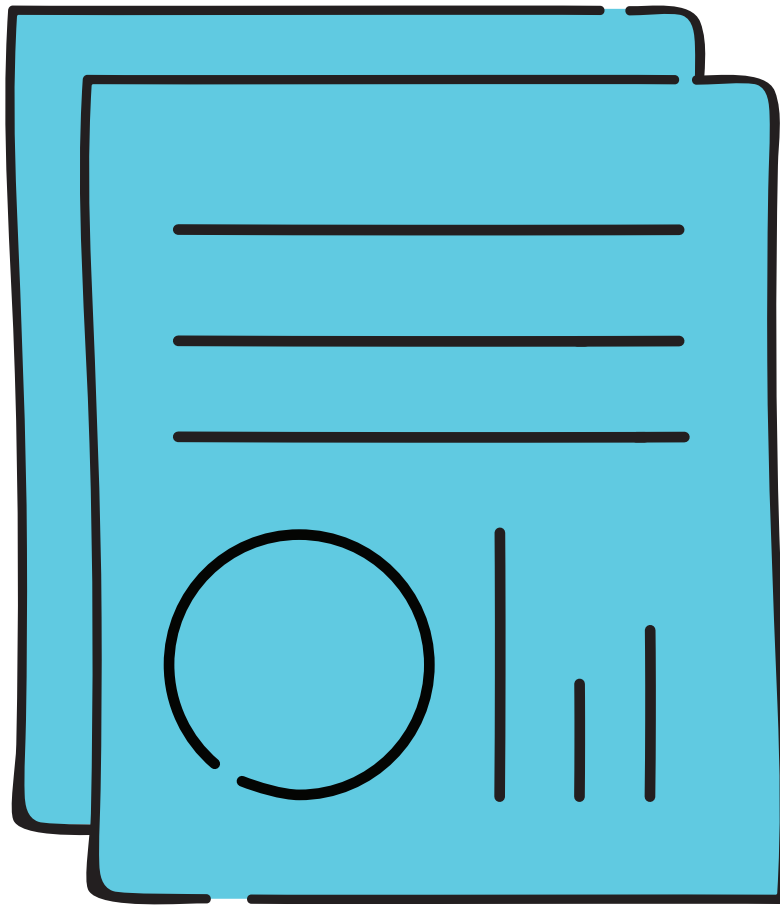
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ProForma

This report represents over a year of work by Metro and the project team. Special thanks to the Community Groups listed to the right, who were invaluable members of the project team.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



This First/Last Mile (FLM) Plan, prepared for all 22 stations on the Metro Blue Line (MBL), is a groundbreaking effort for Metro and its project team, composed of transportation planners and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs). While it represents a first-of-its-kind effort to plan comprehensive access improvements for an entire transit line, its greater innovation is in piloting an inclusive, equity-focused community engagement process. As part of the consultant team for this effort, Metro partnered with a coalition of CBOs to lead outreach efforts on the project, and to help shape the overall direction of this plan.

The coalition consists of:

- Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition
- T.R.US.T. South LA
- Asian Pacific Islander Forward Movement
- Multicultural Communities for Mobility
- Ride On! Bike Co-op
- East Side Riders Bike Club
- Healthy Active Streets

Fehr and Peers served as the transportation consultant and prime contractor on the project. This structure achieved its original intent of enabling broad participation that identified community-driven concerns for transit riders accessing the system. It also emerged that this more open and inclusive outreach can potentially set new templates for Metro, especially as the agency increasingly underscores equity as a key consideration in planning and investment decisions. In order to realize that potential, however, it is also necessary to capture lessons learned from this effort, including opportunities and challenges in pursuing new working relationships. As such, this plan does not read like a typical planning document; it presents a variety of voices that are distinct from a typical Metro or public agency planning document. Several chapters (“Introduction”, “Process”, “Recommendations”,) are generally more typical for public agency plans – describing underlying policy, techniques, results, and action steps. The “Context” and “Lessons Learned” chapters are presented in a unique voice written by our Community-Based Organization partners. Finally, appendices contain detailed findings, including ideas for specific project improvements, for each of the 22 stations on the MBL.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE PLAN

Key findings for the MBL First/Last Mile Plan include:

- There is great importance and further potential for innovative community engagement with CBO partners.
- There is pronounced need for FLM improvements along the MBL, with extensive project need identified through a community-based process around each station.
- There is a range of social, historical, and cultural issues that impact MBL communities including the day-to-day travel experiences within those communities.
- There are clear opportunities to fund, design, and implement first/last mile improvements along the MBL. These further steps must build on the inclusive, community-based process.

CONTENTS OF PLAN

The Plan includes the following sections:

Introduction

This chapter explains the reasons why FLM is important to Metro and its mission. The chapter describes and defines first/last mile planning, along with Metro’s various first/last mile policies and commitments. It further summarizes the first/last mile issues and challenges associated with the Blue Line.

Context

This chapter describes the community and historical context along the Blue Line corridor, including a broad range of issues surfaced through community engagement and among the project team. Included in the discussion are issues of historic disinvestment and redlining, displacement and gentrification, and policing and security, among others. The chapter raises the importance of fully understanding the context of a place to be better able to engage on intersectional topics and carry out authentic and meaningful planning and design processes.

Process

This chapter describes the steps in creating the Plan, including walk audits, community events, and report preparation. Of note, this chapter describes the community coalition members’ roles, the walk audit methodology, and detailed description of the community events. The 11 community events, in sum, entailed: community bike rides; giveaways such as bike raffles, free food, and TAP cards; live DJs; local artists and live painting; and interactive pop-up elements.

Recommendations

This chapter describes generally the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements recommended for the areas around MBL stations. The Recommendations chapter also describes the technical process for developing the Station Area Summaries, which are included as appendices.

Implementation

This chapter describes steps to move recommended infrastructure improvements through funding, design, and construction phases, largely focusing on coordination with local jurisdictions along the MBL corridor. The chapter further lays out ways to prioritize projects for implementation. Possible funding sources are also described and they include State Active Transportation Program (ATP), local return dollars from Measure R and M, FLM programs under Measure M, and other State discretionary (competitive) programs.

Lessons Learned

In this chapter, the authors describe strategies and techniques to promote meaningful community engagement and CBO partnerships in Metro planning efforts, reflecting key lessons learned through the experience on this project. Of particular importance, this chapter addresses how to ensure equity in future FLM plans and expands the lessons learned to larger topics such as capturing institutional memory and history of place; intersectionality and transportation funding; budgeting viable partnerships; displacement and community resources; safety considerations; sharing information of Metro actions within the study area; cross-sector approach; and Metro's legislative agenda.

Appendices

Appendices include the 22 Station Area Summaries capturing the Pathway Network and project lists. Further appendix information includes documentation on methodology, particularly related project cost assumptions.

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