



We're bringing you
a better bus experience.



BETTER BUS PROGRAM

May 2021

Recommended Actions

1. ADOPT Better Bus Program
2. APPROVE Better Bus Investments Plan; pursue five-year funding/implementation strategy; report progress every six months
3. APPROVE Better Bus investments and expenditures in each annual budget and in future updates to Short Range and Long Range Transportation Plans
4. APPROVE, by mid-year, 14 new project FTEs dedicated exclusively to the Better Bus Program



Background on Better Bus Program

- **Unifies Metro bus-related efforts** to improve bus speed, ease, safety, and comfort
- **Sets into action the Vision 2028 goal** to transform bus riding journeys in LA County
- **Addresses the mobility needs of today's riders**, largely essential workers and people of color living in poverty
- **Establishes ongoing bus improvement program** with six-month report-outs on funding and implementation progress



Speed



Ease



Safety & Comfort

FY22 Proposed Budget for Better Bus

- **\$165 million to restore 7.0 million RSH** by September 2021 (Motion 27.1)
- **\$50.6 million for pilot programs**, including:
 - on-board, midday bus interior cleaning pilot.
 - equipment for enhanced pressure washing at bus stops.
 - Digital Rider Alert System: delay advisories and emergency messages by text message and other channels.



FY23-26 Unfunded Needs

\$784M to maintain 7.0 million RSH - assumed to be funded as a part of baseline bus operations, per motion 27.1

Projected over the next four years, \$1.08B in unfunded needs include:

- **\$801M to expedite expansion of the NextGen Speed and Reliability program** (bus lanes, bulb-outs, signal priority) from 2-3 to 10 corridors a year
- **\$167M in programs to address homelessness** (includes costs associated with bus and rail)
- **\$48M in demonstration projects at bus stops**, to incentivize the placement of shelters, real-time information, lighting, and accessibility improvements

Bus Customer Experience: Speed

- **Bus speeds** consistently slowing over the past 25 years (average speed is about 10 mph)
- **Bus lanes and other improvements** can enhance performance and customer experience, increase ridership

Better Bus proposed funding: \$801M for bus lanes, signal preemption, bulb-outs, and other speed and reliability improvements.



Photo credit: StreetsblogLA

Bus Customer Experience: Safety & Comfort



Photo credit: Grist

- **A lack of shade and seating** is a major pain point for current and lapsed Metro riders
- Currently only **24% of bus stops** served by Metro have a transit shelter
- Metro to deepen local partnerships to achieve **60% of stops with shelter by 2026**

Better Bus proposed funding:
\$23M for pilot shelter incentive program

Bus Customer Experience: Safety & Comfort

- **Homelessness** is a crisis for many people
- It also impacts customer experience
- **Cleanliness** is also an important issue for bus riders

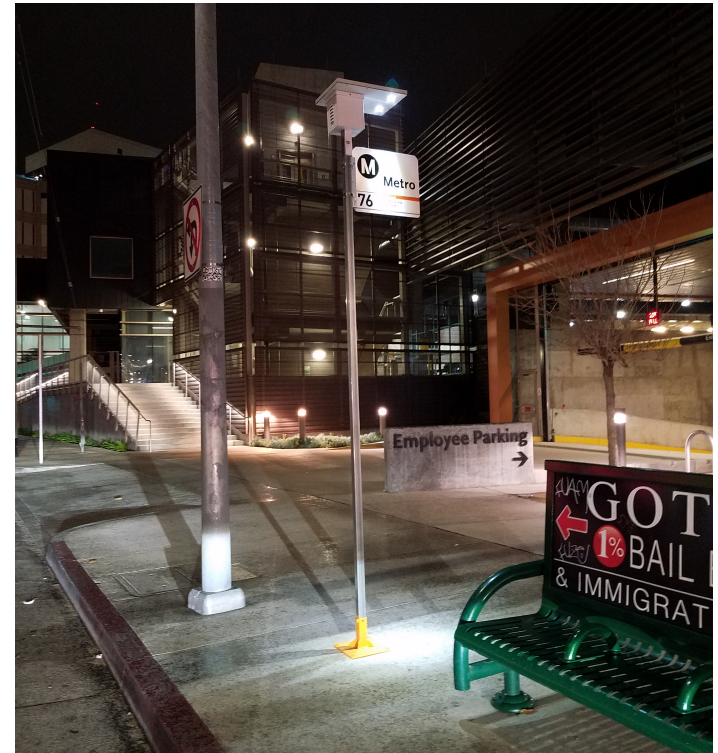
Better Bus proposed funding: \$167M for programs to address homelessness and pilot test layover cleaning



Bus Customer Experience: Ease

- **Women, seniors and people with disabilities** can experience daily barriers to accessing the bus system
- **Piloting new improvements at bus stops**, such as text-to-speech buttons, lighting, tactile markers, etc. to address unmet needs

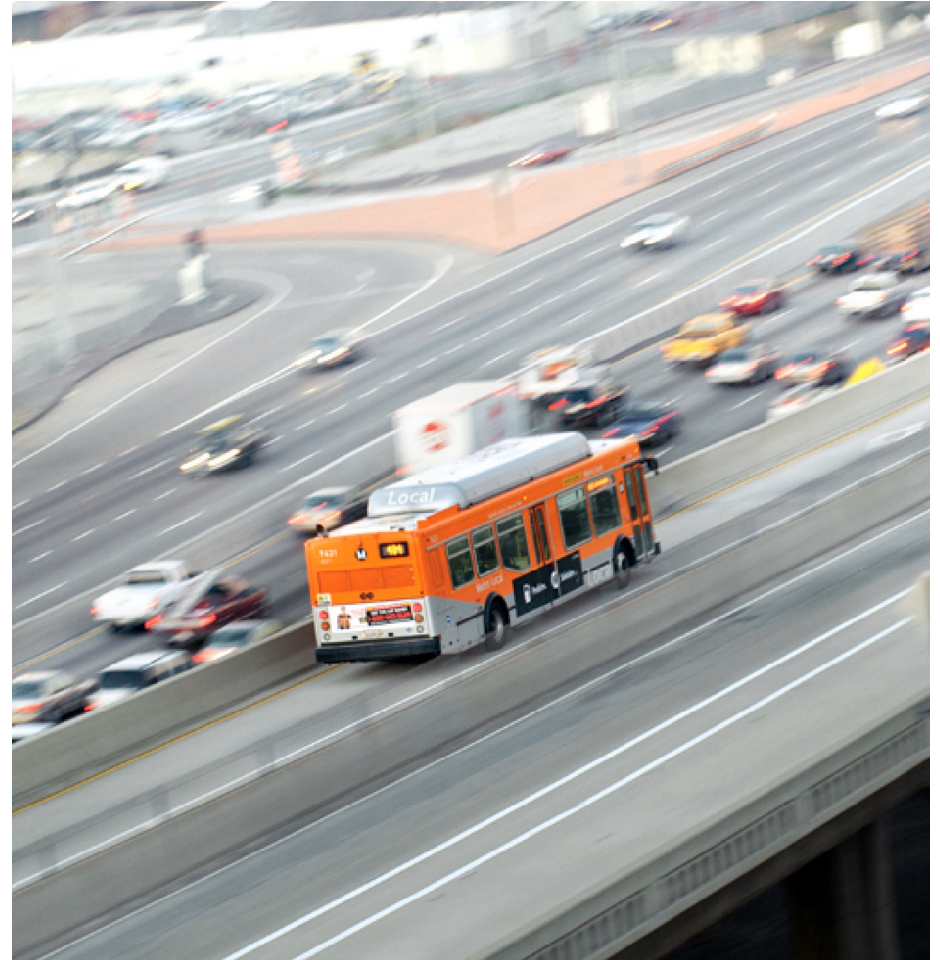
Better Bus proposed funding: \$24M for demonstration projects



Test of a solar lights at a Metro bus stop. Lighting can improve safety as well as detectability of the stop for individuals with low vision.

Potential New Funding Opportunities

- Prop C 25% Funds
- CMAQ
- Reprogrammed highway funds*
- American Jobs Plan
- Multi-year Surface Transportation Authorization
- State-level budget legislation
- Advertising

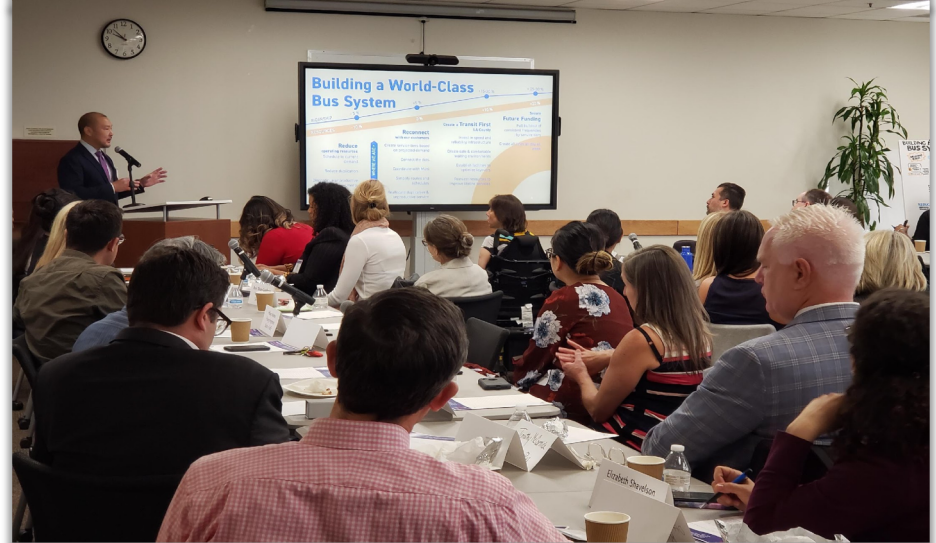
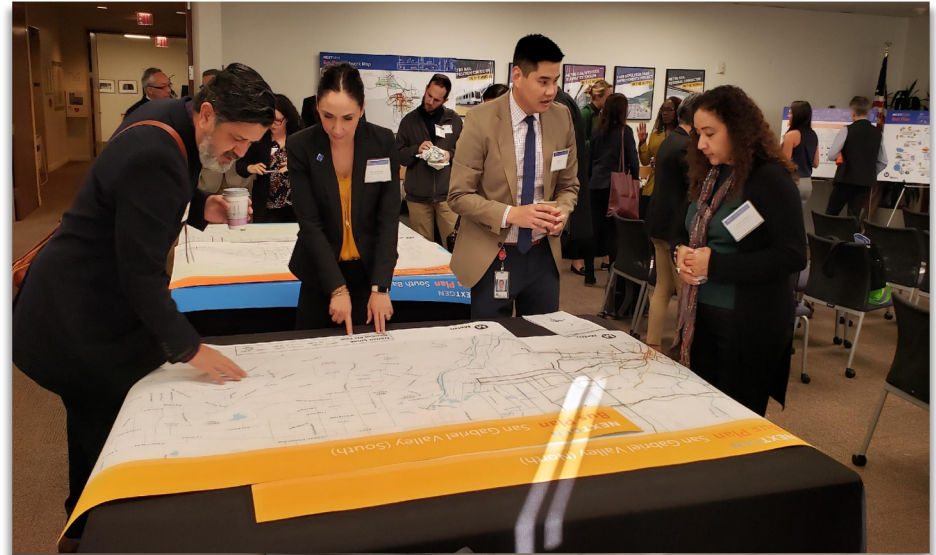


*within ordinances and based on collaboration with subregions

Dedicated Staffing Needs

Total of 14 new project FTE by FY22 midyear:

- Operations (5 FTE) and Communications (7 FTE) for Speed and Reliability Program and Better Bus Stop Local Partnership Program
- Grants Management (2 FTE) to oversee funding and grant-seeking for the Better Bus Program



Summary

Better Bus will transform bus riding journeys for today's riders.

Better Bus will directly benefit Equity Focus Communities, which are critical to the well-being of Los Angeles County.



*We rely on essential workers.
Therefore, we rely on buses.*

Thank you.



Metro