FY26 Public Outreach (Public Comments)

Public Comments Overview

Public engagement is a vital component of the FY26 budget development process, yielding significant feedback and valuable insights into public priorities for Metro. The numerous comments and questions received have been carefully considered in developing the proposed budget.

Key themes emerging from public outreach closely mirrored those of the previous year, underscoring their continued importance to Metro riders:

- **Safety and Security:** Including dedicated efforts for homeless outreach
- **Service:** Emphasizing efficient, frequent, and reliable transit
- **Cleanliness:** Focusing on the condition of vehicles and stations

My Metro Budget Activity
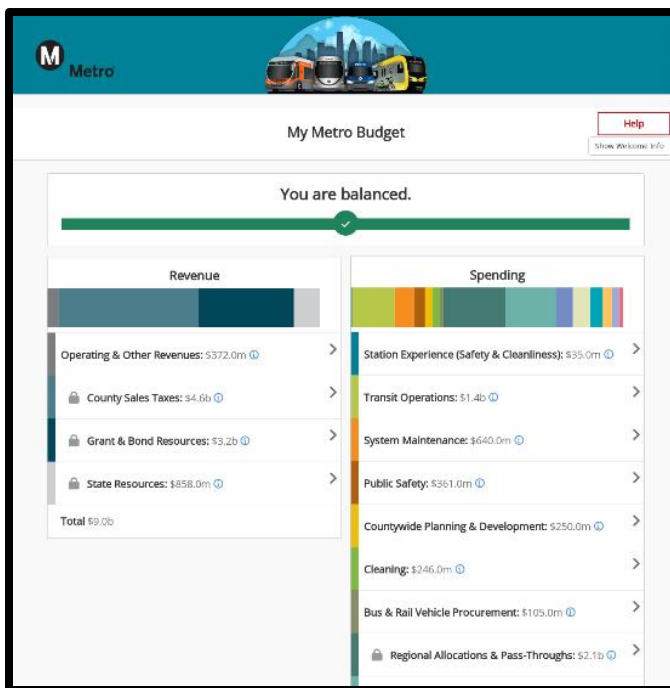
The "My Metro Budget Activity" demonstrated a substantial increase in public participation, garnering over **6,400 responses** and **4,300 written comments**, surpassing last year's figures of 4,200 responses and 3,200 written comments. This enhanced engagement was facilitated by strong collaborative partnerships across various Metro groups and departments, including TAP, GoPass, Community Relations, LIFE, the Women and Girls Governing Council, Station Staff, Metro Micro, Metro Youth Council, Transit Ambassadors, SEED School, and numerous Community-Based Organizations (CBOs). My Metro Budget activity results, and other budgetary information are available on the Metro Budget Portal at budget.metro.net.

Summarized below in the word cloud are the most frequent words used in the comments. The FY26 Proposed Budget addresses the comments and concerns raised.
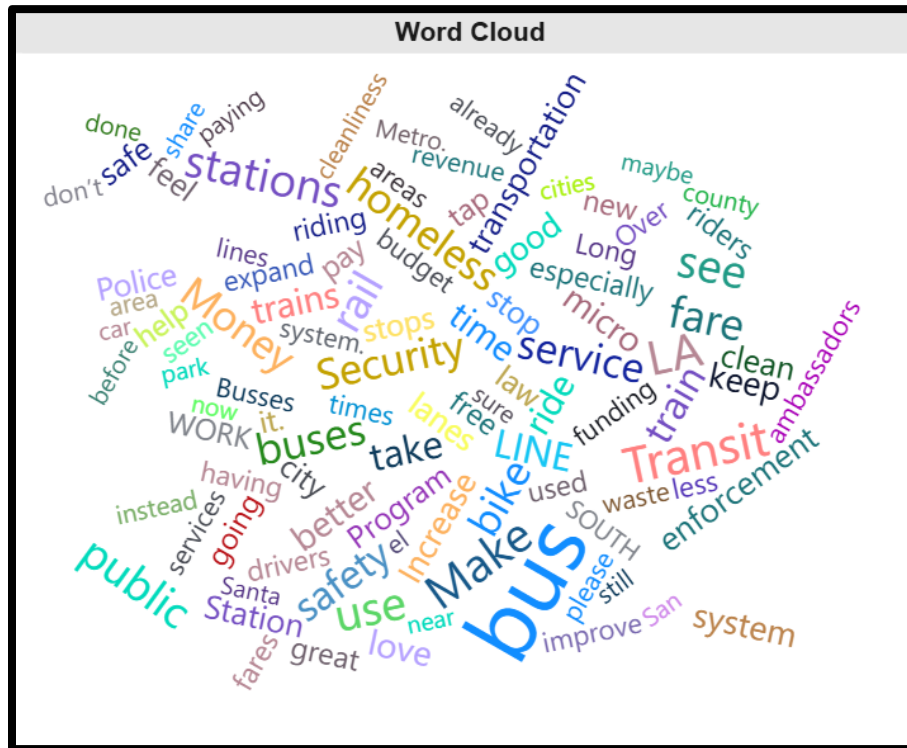

Word Cloud

The word cloud presented above visually highlights key themes that echo the sentiments expressed during FY26 budget outreach. The written comments received through this process are just one method Metro considers in budget development. The prominence of words like "bus," "security," and "transit" aligns directly with the qualitative and quantitative feedback received, consistently indicating that safety, service frequency and reliability, and cleanliness remain top priorities for the community.

Below are My Metro Budget activity demographic results and a map to show participant locations.
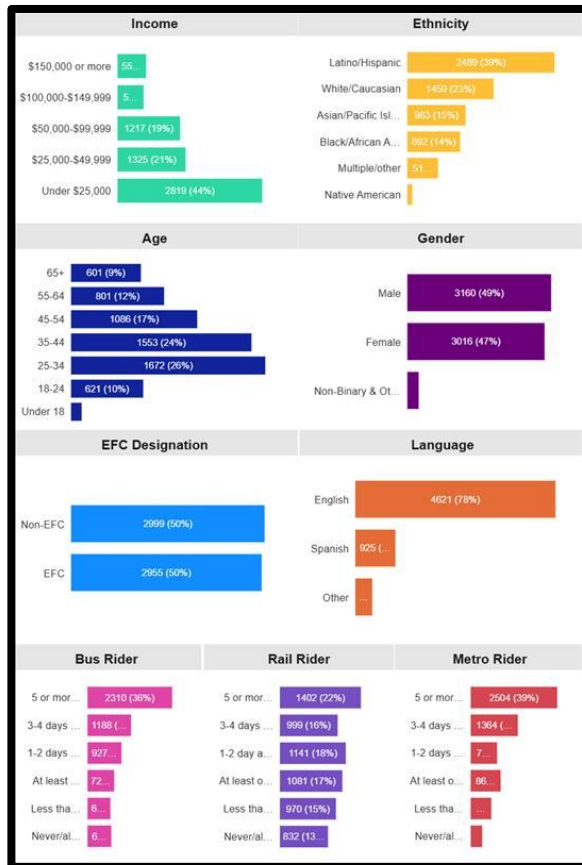
As illustrated in the figure on the left, the respondent demographics closely align with those of LA County and Metro's ridership. This year's survey indicates that 50% of respondents reside in an Equity Focus Community (EFC), 44% have an income below $25,000, 39% identify as Hispanic, and 72% ride Metro one or more days per week. The statistically valid sample ensures the overall results are representative and would not significantly change with further participation.

The map displays the geographic distribution of participants, with orange points specifically indicating residents within EFCs. Metro remains dedicated to robust engagement and outreach within these communities.
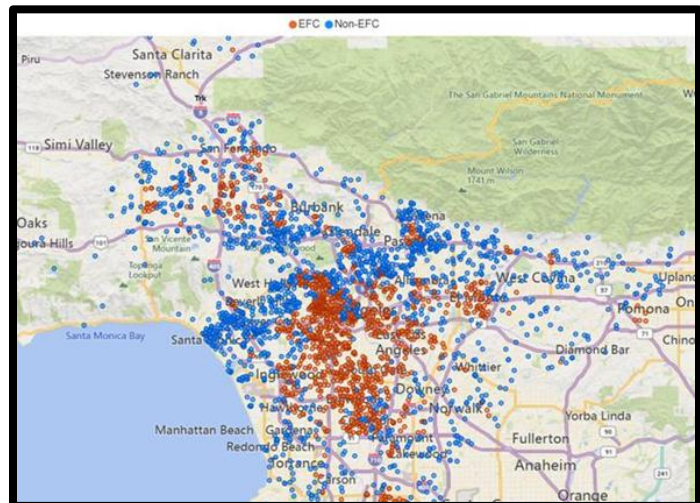
***Metro's Response to Comments & Community Priorities***

In direct response to public comments, the FY26 Proposed Budget allocates significant resources to the identified priorities. To increase safety and security, a $392.5 million investment (a 1.9% increase) will support Ambassadors, Community Intervention Specialists, Homeless Outreach, Crisis Intervention Teams, Metro Transit Security, Private Security, Law Enforcement, and the establishment of the Transit Community Public Safety Department (TCPSD). Recognizing the importance of cleanliness, the cleaning budget is increasing by 13.1% ($36.6 million) and includes $9.9 million for the Station Experience Program. Furthermore, a $157.6 million (5.8%) increase in the Operations & Maintenance budget directly addresses concerns about service by improving speed, frequency, and reliability. Other Investments include:

- Lighting Retrofit
- Elevator/Escalator Modernization
- Mobile ADA Accessible Restrooms
- Tap-To-Exit/Taller Faregates Pilot
- Weapons Detection Phase 2 Pilot
- Mid-line cleaning pilot

Public Engagement Strategy

| Public Engagement	Participation
Telephone Town Hall – February 4, 2025	>2,100 listeners including 121 Spanish listeners
My Metro Budget Activity Responses	>6,400
My Metro Budget Activity Comments	>4,300
My Metro Budget QR Info Cards	>30,000
Budget Portal Views (https://budget.metro.net)	>2,100 views
Community Based Organizations	392
Email Blasts/Community Newsletters	>15
The Source/El Pasajero Posts	1
Social Media Platforms	5 – Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn, NextDoor
Newsprint Publications – Public Hearing Announcement	20 newsprint agencies
Stakeholder & Public Engagement Meetings	21

Metro Budget Portal
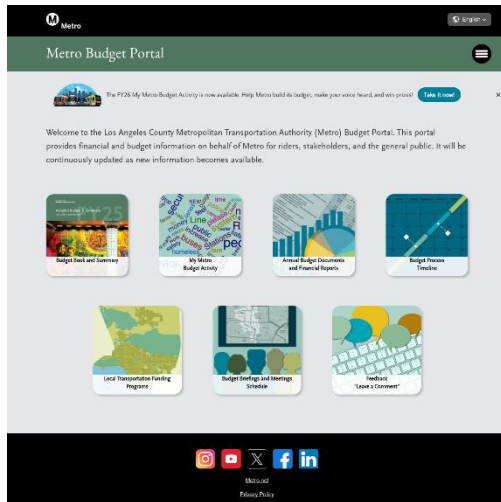
Metro's budget portal (https://budget.metro.net) remains the central hub for all budget-related information, including documents, timelines, and notifications. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) continues to enhance the portal's accessibility, with the notable addition of language translation this year. The portal also provides avenues for public feedback and allows users to subscribe for budget updates.

February 4, 2025, Telephone Town Hall

A Telephone Town Hall (TTH) was held for the FY26 Budget Development Cycle, engaging over 2,100 English and Spanish callers. This unique virtual forum provided a platform for the public to listen to and pose questions directly to Metro senior leadership. Following the Board's request via Motion 25 on February 20, 2025, a report addressing the topics raised during the TTH is provided in Attachment E, within the 90-day timeframe requested by the Board. These TTH events have proven to be an invaluable outreach tool, effectively reaching the EFCs and residents who may face barriers to attending traditional public meetings or participating online. The recording for the February 4, 2025, TTH is accessible on the budget portal.
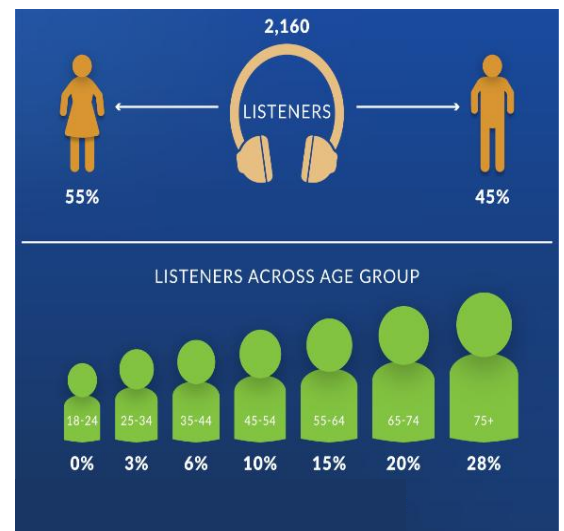
Stakeholder and Public Meetings

The legally mandated budget public hearing, as required by California PUC code 130106 ("Notice of time and place of the public hearing for the adoption of the annual budget shall be published pursuant to Section 6061 of the Government Code and shall be published not later than the 15th day prior to the date of the hearing."), was conducted this year. The notice of the public hearing was published in 20 newspapers, in multiple languages, 15 and 30 days prior to the event.

Metro continued to hold stakeholder meetings throughout the budget development, concluding with the legally required budget public hearing and possible board adoption of

the FY26 Budget. These meetings were guided by a commitment to Putting People First, ensuring that Metro listened and learned from stakeholder input. Detailed schedules, meeting information, and up-to-date budget data were posted on the Finance and Budget portal (https://budget.metro.net) in advance of each event.

FY26 Budget – Outreach Meeting Schedule			
Meeting	Date	Time	Completed
Regional Service Councils Meet & Confer	Nov 24, 2024	6-7pm	X
Telephone Town Hall	Feb 4	6-7pm	X
Community Advisory Council – General Assembly	Feb 26	6-8pm	X
Measure R Independent Taxpayers Oversight Committee	Mar 5	1-2pm	X
Independent Citizens Advisory Committee	Mar 5	2-3pm	X
Community Advisory Council – General Assembly	Mar 20	6-8pm	X
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments	Apr 2	4pm	X
Regional Service Council – San Fernando Valley	Apr 2	6:30-8:30pm	X
Regional Service Council – Westside Cities	Apr 9	6-8pm	X
Regional Service Council – Gateway Cities	Apr 10	5-7pm	X
Regional Service Council – South Bay Cities	Apr 11	9:30-11:30am	X
Regional Service Council – San Gabriel Valley	Apr 14	5-6pm	X
Community Advisory Council	Apr 23	6pm	X
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments	May 7	4pm	X
Gateway Cities Council of Governments	May 7	4pm	X
Technical Advisory Committee	May 7	9:30-11am	X
Accessibility Advisory Committee	May 8	1-3pm	X
South Bay COG	May 12	10:30am	X
Valley Industry Commerce Association	May 13	8:30-10:30am	X
Streets & Freeways Committee	May 15	9:30am	
Public Hearing	May 15	10am	