

# Commercial Sponsorship and Adoption Policy 2025

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

Commercial Sponsorship and Adoption is a form of advertising in which entities will compensate Metro in order to be associated with certain Metro facilities, services, programs, or events. Compensation to Metro can include but is not limited to: monetary payments; resources and finance; payment-in-kind; value-in-kind to develop new facilities, services, programs, or events; or, funding to operate and enhance existing facilities, services, programs, or events.

Through implementation of the Commercial Sponsorship and Adoption Policy (“Policy”), Metro seeks to establish guidelines to execute a responsible and consistent process regarding Sponsorship and Adoption business activities. Metro’s Communications department administers the Commercial Sponsorship and Adoption Program (“Program”) as part of its overall responsibility of revenue-generating advertising and Metro’s overarching goal of partnering with businesses on activities that can increase mobility and brand awareness for customers in the Los Angeles region.

As sponsorship is a form of advertising, the Program will adhere to Metro’s System Advertising Policy (COM 6) and apply the same content restrictions in considering sponsors’ core business, brand, and services. Commercial Sponsorship and Adoption may impact Metro facilities, services, programs, amenities, or events. As Metro facilities, services, programs, and events have already been named, the program will also adhere to Metro’s Property Naming Policy (COM 11) and apply the same public outreach processes and principles pertaining to area location, neighborhood identity and system legibility in considering sponsors’ core business, brand, and services.

## **PURPOSE**

Through implementation of this Policy, Metro seeks to establish guidelines regarding Commercial Sponsorship and Adoption of Metro services, facilities, amenities, programs, and events.

## **Goals and Principles**

This Policy will set direction for how Metro plans and implements Commercial Sponsorship and Adoptions on the Metro system. Specific Program goals include, but are not limited to:

- **Generate long-term revenues to support agency programs and initiatives**

Metro has the fiscal responsibility to maximize the utilization of available resources effectively and efficiently to create long-term, agency-generated revenues. Furthermore, diversifying Metro's revenue sources prepares the agency for future economic shortfalls and unexpected agency impacts.

- **Enhance service and/or amenities that improve customer experience**

Partnerships with local businesses and entities may offset costs of desired customer amenities, such as technology (Wi-Fi, mobile charging stations), commerce (vending kiosks, retail), and convenience (food trucks, parcel pickup). These partnerships allow Metro to focus on operating a world-class transit system while specialist(s) provide amenities enhancing the customer experience.

- **Position corporate social responsibilities towards equity-focused communities**

Metro can create more opportunities to promote small, disadvantaged, and disabled veteran business enterprises through commercial programs by allowing them involvement in the system. Concurrently, corporate entities may provide equity opportunities to communities through Metro's program.

## PROCESS AND PROCEDURE

### Eligible Agency Assets

Metro is the transportation planner and coordinator, designer, builder, and operator of a large and expanding transit system. The infrastructure capital investment and other assets are significant within Metro's county-wide system of bus, rail, and other services; property portfolio; numerous facilities; programs and events. The various facilities, programs, and services that may be eligible for sponsorships and adoption are:

- **Facilities** – Any rail station or bus stop, parking lots and parking structures, regional facilities, maintenance buildings and other structures, Metro headquarters building, and any other property owned, leased, managed, or operated by Metro. Example facilities include Pico Station, Sierra Madre Villa parking structure, and El Monte bus station.
- **Transit Services** – Any light & heavy rail lines, bus service lines & routes, transitway service lines & routes, and any mode of transit service owned, leased, managed, or operated by Metro. Example transit services include A Line, E Line, and Dodgers Stadium Express.
- **Programs** – Selected established Metro-operated effort/initiative for the benefit of customers and communities that Metro serves, generally in the form of customer

service actions and functions. Example programs include Freeway Service Patrol and Metro Micro.

- **Events** – Selected one-time, seasonal, or annual event initiated, partnered with, coordinated by, or conducted by Metro. Example events include Older Adult Expo and Faith Leaders Roundtable.

### **Program Models**

Metro will engage in two types of program models, Adoptions and Sponsorships. Within these two models, proposals may include customized packages of varying Customer Experience techniques and tactics; combine financial payments and value-in-kind amenities; or only provide financial payments or value-in-kind amenities. Metro defines amenities as selected resources, features, or utility that may provide additional enhancement to an established Metro facility, station, or stop. Examples amenities may include technologies such as mobile data and Wi-Fi services, commerce such as retail and vending machines, and convenience such as restrooms.

- **Adoption** - A partnership between Metro and a third party, which provides benefit to Metro riders in the form of sponsored amenities, services, equity opportunities, and customer experience improvements. In an Adoption, third parties may provide resources and/or financing, payment-in-kind, or value-in-kind to develop operating or new facilities, services, programs, or events. Examples: providing free Wi-Fi to a particular station, funding additional maintenance to a particular station.
- **Sponsorship** - A partnership between Metro and a third party, which provides benefit to Metro in the form of financial payments - revenues from sponsorships may be directed towards Metro programs and initiatives. In a Sponsorship, a third party may provide resources and funding, payment-in-kind, or value-in-kind to develop operating or new facilities, services, programs, or events. Examples: temporary station name take-over, long-term media buyouts of a particular station or facility.

### **Terms and Durations**

Sponsorships and Adoptions can take on various forms of advertising in which companies contract with Metro to associate their name, identity and branding with facilities, services, programs or events. Metro may engage in Temporary and Long-Term Sponsorships/Adoptions that provide value and benefit both parties.

- **Temporary** is defined as any Sponsorship/Adoption/Advertising activity lasting up to eighteen months. All temporary commercial activity is within CEO's approval authority. However, any temporary activity affecting facility/station/service names and any short-term renaming/co-naming requires Board notification via board box

memo.

- **Long-term** is defined as any Sponsorship/Adoption/Advertising activity lasting greater than nineteen months with a maximum length of fifteen years. All long-term commercial activity require Board action.
- **Station Renaming** is defined as any Sponsorship/Adoption/Advertising activity that requires the renaming of a facility or station as part of its sponsorship plan; in addition, the renaming activity will impact the facility's official and operational name. Additive naming techniques such as 'Home of' or 'Presented by' that do not impact official and operational name, but may impact façade presentation, are also acceptable. Long-term station renaming requires a minimum five-year commitment to a maximum length of twenty years.

### **Eligibility and Criteria**

In line with Metro's System Advertising Policy (COM 6), business entities selling products or services in the prohibited categories will not be considered for participation in the Program including Alcohol, Tobacco and Electronic Cigarettes, Adult Entertainment and Content, Arms/Guns and Weapons, Political Parties, Political Groups, Political Organizations, and Political Candidates or Campaigns, causes (including Religious Groups and Religious Associations, social advocacy groups, lobbyist, etc), or any other category prohibited by COM 6.

Metro shall consider Sponsorships and Adoptions with qualified entities meeting these criteria:

- Businesses already established in the U.S. or have fulfilled all legal requirements and compliance to establish a business within the United States;
- Businesses must establish current financial stability as well as financial stability for the five years prior to proposal submission;
- Businesses with current responsible practices and positive business history within the last five years prior to proposal submission;
- Businesses with satisfactory record of contractual performance within the last five years prior to proposal submission;
- Businesses must not have been awarded a Metro contract as a prime contractor six months prior to proposal submittal. Businesses will also not be considered for Metro contract as a prime contractor six months following proposal submittal.

### **Proposal Review Committee**

A Proposal Review Committee will be established to review and vet each proposal submitted to the agency. The Proposal Review Committee will be managed by Customer Experience with concurrence from the Chief Customer Experience Officer, or their designee, and will be composed of stakeholder departments to provide feedback and advisory recommendations for Board review and approval. Committee members may include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Compliance Panel** - The Compliance Panel ensures interested sponsors are in compliance with Metro policies and neither discriminate nor pose a conflict of interest. The Compliance Panel does not score the proposal, instead providing review and comment on the sponsoree, the Compliance Panel may include the Chiefs or their designee from these cabinets:
  - Office of Civil Rights, Race, and Equity
  - Ethics
  - Legal Counsel
  - Vendor/Contract Management
  - Office of Management and Budget
  
- **Evaluation Panel** - The Evaluation Panel reviews and scores each proposal based on the Evaluation Criteria. The Evaluation Panel may be composed of scoring members, and non-scoring members that provide comments but do not participate in scoring; comments and recommendations are submitted to the CEO and Board for final review and approval, the Evaluation Panel may include the Chiefs or their designee from these cabinets:
  - Customer Experience
  - Countywide Planning
  - Program Management
  - Operations
  - Respective Asset or Program Owner

### **Evaluation and Criteria**

If a business meets all Eligibility and Criteria, Metro will take into consideration the financial offers and implementation proposals. The Proposal Review Committee will score proposals based on the following evaluation criteria:

- Alignment with Metro's existing brand and agency mission, themes, and priorities
- Innovative sponsorship and business plan(s) that address value-transfers and potential customer experience enhancements
- Reach of cross promotion between Metro and Sponsor/Adoptee, providing Equity Opportunity activities for Metro communities and riders

- Financial offer, including total value and duration, payment options, and package offerings
- Determination of conflicts of interest based on other business activities with Metro

### **Corporate Responsibilities**

All costs related to Sponsorship/Adoption activities of an existing facility, service, or program – including, but not limited to, the costs of replacing affected signage and customer information collateral, Metro materials, media materials, and Metro staff labor – shall be borne by the Adoptee/Sponsor.

Metro expects Sponsorship and Adoption partners to remain in good financial stability and to conduct responsible business practices for the duration of granted Sponsorship/Adoption. Metro may terminate granted Sponsorship/Adoption with partners who fails to maintain these financial and business requirements.

All granted Sponsorship/Adoption must respect and adhere to Metro's System Advertising Policy and Metro's Property Naming Policy.

### **Equity Opportunity and Community**

Metro's mission is to provide a world-class transportation system that enhances quality of life for all who live, work and play within LA County. Under its Equity Platform, Metro recognizes that access to opportunities – including housing, jobs, education, mobility, and healthy communities – is critical for enhanced quality of life. Metro also recognizes that vast disparities exist in access to opportunities and strives to identify and implement projects or programs that reduce and ultimately eliminate those disparities.

Sponsors must include Equity Opportunity in each proposal - which will be scored in the Evaluation Criteria; however, sponsors should consider the qualitative engagement rather than the quantitative engagement within their proposal. While Metro sponsorships will vary, all sponsorships must advance Metro's mission by supporting Equity Opportunity to:

- Increased access to opportunities
- Removal of barriers to access
- Partnership with local communities

Acceptable partnerships will vary. Examples include, but are not limited to:

1. Connecting communities to healthy food especially when they lack such options via the provision of gift cards to grocery stores or health snacks at a community event

2. Promoting safety in high injury areas via bike helmet or bike safety light giveaways
3. Supporting community events via hosting a Wi-Fi hot spots or cooling station

### **Process and Implementation**

Metro may negotiate Sponsorships and Adoptions directly or contract with outside specialist(s) to liaise, negotiate and manage Sponsorships.

### **Metro's Right of Rejection**

Metro and its authorized sponsorship specialist(s) will screen all proposals, Metro reserves the right to reject any Sponsorships submitted for consideration. Decisions regarding the rejection or termination of Sponsorships are made by Metro's Chief Customer Experience Officer or their designee based upon the criteria in this Policy.

### **System Integration**

Metro has an established transit system with known nomenclature, customer information, and service names, thus, coordination with stakeholder departments will be critical to:

- Conclude acceptable enhancements to system facilities affecting customer experience - such as station identity and signage wayfinding.
- Establish reasonable implementation schedules and deliverables - such as those affecting operational logistics in stations, trains, and buses; fabrication logistics such as signage; and customer information materials.

### **Public Information**

All granted Sponsorship/Adoption are subject to the provisions of the California Public Records Act (California Code Government Code §6250 et seq.), including monies paid to Metro.