



Governance Alternatives

Ad Hoc Committee on Board Composition

May 2026

Motion 33.1 — January 2026

Directors Dutra, Barger, Horvath, Padilla, Najarian, and Dupont-Walker



...it is essential that Metro's Board composition continue to reflect the diversity and geographic breadth of the County it serves, and that any consideration of potential changes be guided by principles of geographic equity, balanced representation, cost neutrality and jurisdictional inclusion...

Any review of Metro's Board structure should be conducted in a transparent manner and led by Metro itself, consistent with its statutory authority and regional role. In this context, an Ad Hoc Committee has been established to review the current Board composition in a transparent and locally-driven manner. The Committee's deliberations and recommendations should be informed by relevant comparative, historical, and demographic context."

February 2026: First Committee Meeting

The Ad Hoc Committee received foundational context to frame its work.

Governance History

Metro's History Reviewed

The Committee received a briefing on Metro's governance history and the foundational premise for the current Board composition structure, providing historical context for the reform discussion.

Statutory Authority

Metro's Legal Framework

Metro is established as an independent legal entity under State statute (California Public Utilities Code). Its Board composition and appointment structure can only be modified through state legislative action.

Measure G Timeline

Implementation Context

The Committee reviewed the implementation timeline for Measure G — including the 2028 County CEO election and 2032 BOS expansion — to understand the County governance changes driving this review.

Outreach Launched

Three-Month Public Campaign

The Committee provided guidance as staff launched a three-month countywide outreach campaign to gather public and stakeholder input.

Peer Agency Benchmarking

At its March 2026 meeting, the Committee reviewed board composition and governance structures at large U.S. transit agencies comparable to Metro.

12

Peer & Reference Agencies Reviewed

7 primary peers (NY MTA, NJ Transit, MBTA, SEPTA, WMATA, CTA, BART) +
5 reference agencies (Sound Transit, MARTA, Community Transit, Pittsburgh Regional Transit and Toronto Transit Commission)

~10

Avg. Voting Board Members at Peers

Larger agencies average 10;
Smaller average 12.
Metro's 13-member board is at the higher
end of the range.

No Single Governance Model Dominates Regional Public Agencies

Metro is unique as the only agency reviewed
where all county elected officials serve ex
officio — automatically by virtue of holding
the office.

Changes to board composition generally require state legislative action.

Local agencies also reviewed - no single governance model dominates regional public agencies in Los Angeles County.

Metro’s Advisory Body Network

At its April 2026 meeting, the Committee reviewed Metro’s advisory bodies — a more comprehensive network than found at peer agencies.

Community Advisory Council (CAC) & TBAC	Five Regional Service Councils	Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC)
Advisory bodies provide rider and community input on major policy and planning decisions and business advisory input; both pursuant to State Law	Hold decision-making authority over local bus service changes — a feature not commonly seen at peer agencies	Recommendations on Metro’s public safety programs and law enforcement activities
Technical Expertise	Community and Riders	Oversight Committees
Technical experts from jurisdictions advising on planning, programming, and project delivery on the Technical Advisory Committee, Sustainability Council and Policy Advisory Committee	Accessibility Committee and Youth Councils engage riders — Metro is ahead of most peer agencies in institutionalizing youth voice in governance	Independent fiscal oversight ensuring accountability for sales tax measures and capital program funds as well as operations

Riders are represented on these advisory bodies.

Guiding Values

At its March 2026 meeting, the Committee first reviewed and discussed the values framework. The Committee adopted the following guiding values at its April 2026 meeting.



Legal Integrity



Intergovernmental Balance



Electoral Accountability



Regional Equity



Transparency & Public Trust



Fiscal Stewardship



Functional Effectiveness



Customer Experience



Adaptability

Community Outreach — Scope & Reach

Staff conducted a three-month countywide community and stakeholder outreach effort to gather input on Metro’s governance structure.



Stakeholder Engagement

Preliminary meetings in February with Service Councils, business orgs, and local government agencies shaped outreach language and methodology, followed by formal presentations including to the Las Virgenes-Malibu, Westside Cities, Gateway Cities, San Fernando Valley, San Gabriel Valley, and South Bay Cities COGs, and the North LA County Transportation Coalition (NCTC) JPA as well as business groups.

*Arroyo Verdugo Communities JPA did not meet but was provided with presentation materials.

Community Events

7 listening sessions hosted by Service Councils, PSAC, and the CAC.
Two staff-led virtual listening sessions (countywide + North County-focused).
Thirteen pop-up transit intercepts staged throughout the County.

Digital Channels

Dedicated project website, multilingual online surveys, and public comment via email and phone generated over 2,600 website views and 1,300 engagement touchpoints, yielding ~900 survey responses with broad countywide participation.

Community Outreach — What We Heard

Themes emerged across public forums, listening sessions, stakeholder interviews, and the online survey.

Accountability & Representation	Community members widely expressed that the Board should be directly accountable to riders and transit-dependent communities, with clearer mechanisms for ensuring their perspectives are formally represented in governance.
Diversity of Board Membership	Participants supported broader expertise on the Board — including transportation planning, equity, and finance — and greater transparency in the appointment process.
Formal Rider Voice	Participants advocated for adding a representative with direct transit experience.
Transparency & Public Trust	Emphasis that Board decision-making should be transparent and responsible to riders and communities — particularly on major policy, service, and investment decisions that directly affect transit-dependent populations.
No Advocacy for Board Expansion	No advocacy for expanding the size of the Board or explicitly called for including the County’s future elected CEO in Board composition as a governance priority.

Overview of Four Governance Alternatives

Alt. A Flexible Appointments Appointing authorities could appoint electeds or public members (riders, SMEs). Preserves existing structure while enabling voluntary diversification of the Board. BOARD STRUCTURE 13 voting + 1 NV Governor appointee 5 County 4 City of L.A. 4 Other Cities 1 State NV	Alt. B Directly Elected Board Replaces appointment-based structure with 13 members directly elected by voters from new geographic districts across LA County. BOARD STRUCTURE 13 directly elected + 1 NV Governor appointee (Replaces all County, City of L.A., and Other Cities tiers)	Alt. C Non-Voting Rider Adds one non-voting rider or community stakeholder. Directly advances rider voice and regional equity. BOARD STRUCTURE 13 voting (unchanged) + 1 NV Governor appointee + 1 NV Rider	Alt. D Maintaining Appointments After BOS expands to 9 in 2032, five Supervisors self-select or designate County CEO. All other current appointment mechanisms remain intact. BOARD STRUCTURE 13 voting + 1 NV Governor appointee 5 County 4 City of L.A. 4 Other Cities 1 State NV
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Flexible Appointments

Appointing Authorities empowered to appoint electeds or public members (which could be riders or subject matter experts)

County	City of L.A.	Other 87 Cities	State (NV)	
5 of 9 seats BOS members and/or public appointees; County CEO potentially eligible, as designated by the BOS	4 seats Mayor and/or public member appointees as designated by the Mayor	4 seats City Selection Committee; may include public members	1 seat Governor Appointee	14 Total 13 voting + 1 NV

Key Considerations



Preserves *Intergovernmental Balance* and existing appointment structure. *Fiscal Stewardship* preserved.



Functional Effectiveness – preserved as long as appointees serve standards terms, which will promote institutional memory



Advances *Regional Equity* and *Customer Experience* if appointing authorities adopt criteria that prioritize diverse, transit-experienced members



Electoral Accountability and Transparent & Public Trust – if electeds do not serve, accountability to voters is less direct, will require clear, publicly communicated appointment processes

Directly Elected Board

Replaces the appointment-based structure with 13 members directly elected by voters from newly created geographic districts across LA County.

Proposed Structure

13 Directly Elected Members from countywide voting districts + 1 Governor's Appointee (non-voting)

(replaces all County, City of L.A., and Other Cities appointment tiers) + 1 NV (Governor's appointee)

14

Total

13 voting
+ 1 NV

Key Considerations



Promotes *Electoral Accountability*; members directly accountable to transit voters



Significantly changes *Intergovernmental Balance*; removes governmental appointment authority from all tiers



Raises significant *Fiscal Stewardship* concerns — election administration costs and risk of losing intergovernmental funding leverage as current board composition has strong State and Federal ties



Ability to promote *Customer Service* and *Regional Equity* will depend on district design. Fixed district structure limits *Adaptability*; redrawing boundaries requires additional legislative cycles

Non-Voting Rider Representative

Adds one non-voting rider or community stakeholder to the Board.

Role & Selection

- Attends all Board and committee meetings in a non-voting advisory capacity
- Selected through existing advisory bodies (Service Councils, CAC) or a public nomination and screening process



Customer Experience

Directly advances rider voice — ensures transit-dependent community perspectives are consistently present in Board deliberations and committee meetings



Regional Equity

Gives voice to underrepresented communities that most rely on Metro but may lack direct representation through governmental appointment processes



Transparency & Public Trust

Requires that any selection process for the rider representative be clear, accessible, and publicly visible

Maintaining Board Appointments

After BOS expands to 9 in 2032, five Supervisors self-select or designate County CEO. All current appointment mechanisms remain intact.

County	City of L.A.	Other 87 Cities	State (NV)	
5 of 9 seats BOS members or County CEO, self-selected by BOS after 2032 expansion	4 seats Mayor of L.A. plus 3 mayoral appointees (2 public members; 1 City Council)	4 seats City Selection Committee; one elected official per subregion, weighted by population	1 seat Gov. Appointee	14 Total 13 voting + 1 NV

Key Considerations

- ✓

Supports *Transparency & Public Trust* — well-established structure is understandable and defensible to the public and institutional stakeholders
- ✓

Supports *Regional Equity and Customer Service* consistent with current practice
- ✓

Preserves *Intergovernmental Balance, Fiscal Stewardship, and Functional Effectiveness*
- ✓

Adaptability - Responsive to Measure G and maintains *Electoral Accountability* in a manner consistent with peer agencies that have a subset of County elected representation

Board Size: No Expansion Recommended

All four alternatives preserve Metro's current 13-voting-member structure.

Rationale — Grounded in the Committee's Guiding Values and Community Feedback

Legal Integrity	Board expansion requires new California state legislation, adding legal process complexity and precedent concerns. Once enacted, the expanded structure would carry the same legal integrity as the current framework.
Intergovernmental Balance	Adding seats raises unresolved questions about which tiers gain representation; risking disruption to the current balance. 
Electoral Accountability	Adding seats may dilute or complicate the existing electoral accountability structure without a demonstrable governance benefit.
Regional Equity	Community outreach showed that stakeholders prioritized improved accountability and rider/SME representation, not structural expansion.
Transparency & Public Trust	A governance structure familiar and consistent with peer institutions is more understandable and defensible to the public than one expanded solely in response to County governance changes.
Fiscal Stewardship	Expanding the Board would impose additional administrative, compensation, and logistical costs on the agency and taxpayers without a governance benefit identified in the peer review or community outreach.
Functional Effectiveness	Peer agency boards average ~10 voting members. Enlarging Metro's 13-member board risks slowing deliberation and undermining the Board's ability to make timely, high-quality decisions on multi-decade investments.
Customer Experience	Board size does not directly determine rider experience. Improvements in service quality and customer outcomes are driven by Board priorities and agency management, not the number of seats.
Adaptability	Maintaining the current structure preserves flexibility to consider targeted additions — such as the non-voting rider representative (Alt. C) — without committing to structural expansion that would be difficult to reverse.