



## Board Report

File #: 2017-0928, File Type: Plan

Agenda Number: 19.

**REVISED  
PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE  
APRIL 11, 2018**

**SUBJECT: BLUE LINE FIRST/LAST MILE PLAN**

**ACTION: APPROVE BLUE LINE FIRST/LAST MILE PLAN  
AND AUTHORIZE PURSUIT OF GRANT FUNDING**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

CONSIDER:

- A. ADOPTING Blue Line First/Last Mile Plan, and
- B. AUTHORIZING the Chief Executive Officer to seek grant funding for Plan implementation.

### **ISSUE**

The Blue Line First/Last Mile Plan (Plan) documents community-identified first/last mile (FLM) improvements around all 22 Metro Blue Line (MBL) stations. The high-level improvements in the Plan align with Metro policy and are being further analyzed for feasibility and prioritization for implementation. An upcoming funding opportunity to implement the Plan is the State Active Transportation Program (ATP) Cycle 4 and other funding opportunities for implementing the Plan may become available in the future.

The full Plan can be accessed via the web at this link:  
[<https://www.metro.net/projects/transit-oriented-communities/blue-line-flm/>](https://www.metro.net/projects/transit-oriented-communities/blue-line-flm/). The Executive Summary is included as Attachment A to this board report.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Background**

As part of efforts to increase ridership by improving transit riders' ability to safely and conveniently access a transit station, on May 26, 2016 the Board established new FLM activities and expanded FLM planning and implementation through Board Motion 14.1, Directors Garcetti, Bonin, Kuehl, Solis, Dubois, and Najarian; and Board Motion 14.2, Directors Butts, Dubois, Knabe, and Solis (Attachments B and C). The Plan is one of the first components identified in that board action, and is a critical first FLM planning exercise because it: a) is the first opportunity to comprehensively plan

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FLM improvements for a transit corridor; b) aligns with Metro's current work to improve MBL performance and safety; c) will substantially inform future work for the FLM program; and d) aligns closely with the principles of the Metro Equity Platform Framework recently adopted by the Board.

Metro received an ATP Cycle 1 grant from the State to conduct FLM planning for all 22 MBL stations. The Plan was completed in March 2018 and includes planning-level, community-identified pedestrian and bicycle improvements within walking (1/2-mile) and biking (3-mile) distance of each MBL station. The Plan describes the collaborative approach and process for arriving at the improvements, which represent a range of walking and bicycling access improvements including new or improved crosswalks, curb ramps, and sidewalks; facilities to improve bicycle connections to stations; pedestrian-scale lighting; and wayfinding signage among others. Community engagement led by community-based organizations (CBOs) was instrumental in developing the Plan and represents new approaches consistent with direction outlined in Metro's Equity Platform. In anticipation of funding opportunities to implement projects identified in the Plan, feasibility analyses and a process of prioritization with local jurisdictions is underway this spring.

There is great need for FLM improvements around MBL stations. The Plan puts forth a Pathway Network and FLM project ideas to address this need in a complex setting. Wide-ranging conditions exist along the line and are described in the Plan; for example, a walkable urban core exists around some stations compared to low density residential and light industrial in other areas around stations. Another complexity in the areas around the stations is multiple converging jurisdictions; for example, there are four jurisdictions within 1/2 mile of the Slauson Station. Mode compatibility issues also exist along the MBL (e.g. pedestrians having to cross a freight line or goods movement corridor to access a MBL station).

### Process

Development of the Plan started in October 2016 with kick-off of a consultant contract. In addition to consulting firms, the contracted project team included seven CBOs, which represent communities along the MBL including (in alphabetical order):

- API Forward Movement
- East Side Riders Bike Club
- Healthy Active Streets
- Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition
- MultiCultural Communities for Mobility
- Ride On! Bike Co-op
- T.R.U.S.T. South LA

In addition to the CBOs listed above, Los Angeles Conservation Corps provided their support and services to the project, per ATP Cycle 1 requirements.

The project team executed the methodology from the First Last Mile Strategic Plan (adopted 2014). This included walk audits of every station area, development of draft Pathway Networks and project ideas, community engagement events, finalization of Pathway Networks and project ideas.

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The project team reached out to all of the communities along the MBL through an extensive and unique community engagement process. The approach to community engagement is described in the Plan in detail and aligns with Metro's Equity Platform. The CBOs led 22 walk audits for all the station areas and spearheaded 11 community events to gather input from the wider community. The CBOs were also instrumental in the project in other ways; contributing the voice of history and community memory that was valuable in shaping conversations, project materials, community engagement events, and ultimately the final Plan. Additionally, throughout the process of developing the Plan, the CBOs and other community members underscored the importance of addressing wide-ranging concerns; topics that are not traditionally under the purview of Metro or treated in Metro plans, but that should be acknowledged and addressed in a coordinated way when discussing first/last mile improvements. For example, considerations related to crosswalk safety or safe bicycle facilities cannot be disentangled from concerns community members have about feeling safe and secure. The CBOs also raised that discussing first/last mile improvements brought up fears about gentrification and displacement. A summary of the history and concerns of the communities along the MBL is included in the Plan.

The full Plan can be accessed via the web at this link:

<https://www.metro.net/projects/transit-oriented-communities/blue-line-flm/>. The Executive Summary is included as Attachment A to this board report.

#### Local Jurisdiction Coordination and ATP Cycle 4 Grant Application(s)

First/last mile projects typically fall outside Metro-controlled right-of-way, therefore close coordination and buy-in from local jurisdictions is critical for implementation. During development of the Plan, staff met with nine local jurisdictions within the ½-mile walking distance and 3-mile biking distance around each MBL station. Jurisdictions commented on the community-identified project ideas that fall within their right-of-way. Cities along the MBL and the County have been supportive of the types of projects identified in the Plan.

The State ATP is an appropriate and opportune funding source to implement first/last mile improvements. ATP Cycle 4 application deadline is summer 2018. On October 26, 2017, the Board approved the ATP Cycle 4 Priorities Framework, which identified the MBL first/last mile plan as a priority for grant assistance. A competitive ATP application would demonstrate extensive community engagement and local buy-in, and serve State-designated Disadvantaged Communities; the Plan does that and therefore staff recommends applying for ATP Cycle 4.

Partnering with local jurisdictions is crucial to move forward with an ATP application or package of applications. Metro staff continues to meet with local jurisdiction staff about project prioritization, implementation approach, and local match commitments to support an ATP grant application(s). While local match is not a requirement for ATP, providing local match does increase competitiveness. Metro staff has initiated discussion with local jurisdictions about their capacity to provide a local match for the ATP application, subject to requisite approvals.

#### "Lessons Learned" and Applicability to First/Last Mile Program

Now that the Plan is complete, the project team is pursuing an evaluative step to look back at the process to develop the Plan, identify opportunities to refine and improve the FLM methodology, and determine how "lessons learned" can be applied to in-process and upcoming projects in the FLM

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program. We expect that lessons learned will cover both technical- and process-oriented topics, including the following categories, among others:

- Technical methodology including walk audits and data analysis
- Approaches to define the Pathway Network and refine project ideas
- Community engagement: breadth of issues, budget, participation incentives, materials

Lessons learned will likely have broader applicability beyond FLM projects, and will be coordinated with other Metro projects and staff, notably Metro's Equity Platform efforts and the Long Range Transportation Plan.

### **DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT**

One key objective of the Plan is to improve safety for transit riders and non-riders alike who walk, bike, or roll near transit stations through pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements. Further feasibility analysis will identify projects in locations with the highest potential to address safety issues for pedestrians and bicyclists.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Any commitment of Metro funds for improvements identified in the Plan would be subject to future board action. Metro anticipates that, if awarded, Metro will pass through the grant monies to local jurisdictions for implementation. ATP is a reimbursable grant and a local match is not required. However, grant competitiveness is enhanced by committing local match, and Metro is working with jurisdictions along corridor to identify local sources of match that might be brought to bear as part of the application for projects in their station areas.

#### Impact to Budget

Approval of this item has no impact to the FY 2018 Budget.

### **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

The Board could decide not to approve the Plan or authorize the CEO to seek grant funding to implement it. This is not recommended; first/last mile improvements are needed for the areas around the MBL stations, which is supported by the community and local jurisdictions. The Board has previously identified expanding Metro's FLM program, starting with the MBL. Further, if the Board decides not to authorize the CEO to seek grant funding, that would not align with October 26, 2017 Board action approving the ATP Cycle 4 Priorities Framework, which identified the MBL first/last mile plan as a priority for grant assistance.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Upon approval, staff would develop an ATP Cycle 4 grant application or package of applications and seek other funding options as appropriate for implementation of the Plan.

Feasibility analysis and a prioritization process will continue so that projects in the Plan can be easily

identified for inclusion in the ATP grant application(s). Additionally, staff will continue working with jurisdictions along the MBL to secure matching funds.

As was noted in the First/Last Mile Motion Response presented to the Board in November 2016, the Blue Line Corridor First/Last Mile Plan was originally funded with a state Active Transportation Program (ATP) grant, and was the prototype for the recommendation that similar FLM plans be eventually done for 254 stations across the network. These stations included all existing rail lines, and the top 100 bus stops (by usage). However, this was not the only implementation element outlined in the combined response to Motions 14.1 and 14.2. The complete list included:

- Transit Capital project Guidelines, to ensure incorporation of FLM elements in major transit projects prior to construction;
- Purple Line section 2 and 3 FLM planning and design, and also Gold Line Phase 2B
- Countywide First/Last Mile Planning (the 254 station sites)
- Grant/funding Technical assistance, and
- Development of a Matching Grant program.

Staff can report in the near future on the overall status of each of these elements. Consistent with direction from the Board, staff has prioritized the first two bulleted items, as these are time sensitive to complete in order for corridor jurisdictions to consider FLM elements as part of related Measure M 3% required local contributions. As well, grant funding has been secured for local jurisdictions seeking technical assistance with state Active Transportation Program grant applications. These priorities fully commit dedicated FLM staff resources through FY 19.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

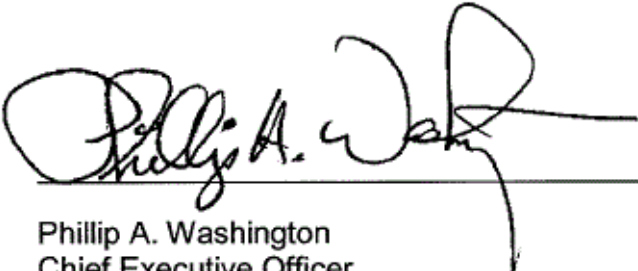
Attachment A - Blue Line First/Last Mile Plan Executive Summary

Attachment B - Board Motion 14.1

Attachment C - Board Motion 14.2

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