



## Board Report

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**REVISED**  
**SYSTEM SAFETY, SECURITY AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**JUNE 21, 2018**

**SUBJECT: NEW BLUE BUS SERVICE CONCEPT AND FARE STRUCTURE**

**ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE**

**RECOMMENDATION**

RECEIVE AND FILE status report on the service concept and fare structure for the New Blue Bus Replacement Service.

**ISSUE**

Starting January 2019, the Blue Line will undergo a comprehensive eight-month modernization program to improve reliability and resiliency, enhance safety, and extend the service life of the Blue Line. In addition, there will be significant improvements to the Willowbrook/Rosa Parks Station.

To minimize service impacts and confusion for our customers, and to provide an unconstrained environment for construction activities, the Blue Line will close one half of the line at a time, for a period of four months each, beginning with the southern portion. The Willowbrook/Rosa Parks Station will be closed for the entirety of the eight months. To maintain service during construction, a series of bus services will be provided and tailored for short, mid and long-distance trip making. Complementing the bus services will be a fare structure designed to follow Metro's past practices for bus bridges as well as the current fare structure for similar services. This report details and rationale for the bus service concept and fare structure.

**DISCUSSION**

Starting January 2019, the Blue Line will undergo a comprehensive modernization program, including:

- Train Control Improvements
- Track Improvements
- Overhead Power Improvements
- Willowbrook/Rosa Parks Station Improvements
- Other Station Improvements

This project, known as the “New Blue”, is expected to improve reliability and resiliency, enhance safety, and extend the service life of the Blue Line. In addition, significant improvements to the Willowbrook/Rosa Park Station will:

- Enhance Safety and Security
- Improve Connections to the Surrounding Community
- Expand Station Capacity
- Streamline Rail and Bus Transfers

### New Blue Service Concept and Fare Structure

The Blue Line will be closed in two (2) phases during a project period of eight months to minimize service impacts and confusion for customers, and to provide an unconstrained environment for construction activities.. Phase 1 will begin the first weekend of January through the end of April 2019; the Blue Line will operate from 7<sup>th</sup> St/Metro Station to 103<sup>rd</sup> St Station. Phase 2 will commence the beginning of May through end of August 2019; the Blue Line will service stations between Compton and Downtown Long Beach.

Metro’s operational goals and objectives for the New Blue supplemental services are to provide high quality regionally coordinated transit services that are reliable, fully integrated, convenient, and simple to use and provide maximum benefit to customers during this temporary suspension of service.

With this objective in mind, staff evaluated the existing travel demand along the Blue Line corridor and uncovered the following four (4) prominent travel markets:

- **North Segment:** Thirty-five percent (35%) of Blue line riders travel within the north segment between 103<sup>rd</sup> St. Station and 7<sup>th</sup>/Metro Station.
- **South Segment:** Thirty percent (30%) travel within the south segment between Compton and Downtown Long Beach stations.
- **Mid-Corridor:** Twenty-one percent (21%) of Blue line riders travel between the north and south segments
- **End-to-End:** Fifteen percent (15%) travel from one end of the alignment to the other

To make travel through the corridor more efficient the Blue Line will maintain its rail operation for half of the alignment, while the other half is closed for construction activities During Phase 1, Blue Line rail service will operate north of the Willowbrook Station from 7th St/Metro Station to 103<sup>rd</sup> Station. While Phase 2 is underway, rail services will operate south of the Willowbrook Station from the Downtown Long Beach Station to Compton Station.

Metro recognizes the need to ensure that transit use continues to be convenient during each construction phase. Therefore, staff developed a New Blue Bus Service Plan that includes three distinct bus options designed to serve each of the travel markets described above. This includes a Local “Bus Bridge” Shuttle, Mid-Corridor Rapid, and Downtown-to-Downtown Express options to replace train service in the closed segments. The new replacement bus services are as described

below:

- **Local “Bus Bridge” Shuttle** - Historically, Metro offers a temporary bus bridge shuttle to replace rail service that has been suspended. This service will provide direct connection to all of the closed stations, free of charge. The shuttle will mirror the existing train schedule and span of service to provide a seamless transfer between replacement bus service and the remaining rail service.
- **Mid-Corridor Rapid** - The mid-corridor rapid is a limited stop service and will provide a direct connection to the Blue Line at the first transfer station. A base fare of \$1.75 will apply to this service, and customers will benefit from Metro’s 2-hour free transfer policy to and from the Blue Line. The Mid-Corridor Rapid will operate Monday through Friday only during the peak periods.
- **Downtown-to-Downtown Express** - ~~The Silver Line typically serves as an alternative to the Blue Line when rail service is interrupted. As such, staff anticipates the need to increase service on the Silver Line to accommodate Blue Line customers currently travelling between downtown Long Beach and downtown LA. However, instead of forcing Blue Line riders to drive to an existing Silver Line station, staff proposed to add additional Silver Line trips that will be extended from the Rosecrans Silver Line station to downtown Long Beach to improve customer convenience by providing a one seat ride between downtown Long Beach and downtown LA. The Silver Line fare is a base fare of \$2.50, or an upcharge of \$0.75. As stated above, roughly 15% of Blue Line riders travel between downtown Long Beach and downtown LA. The Blue Line end to end running time is approximately 57 minutes. The Downtown-to-Downtown Express would provide a comparable travel time with stops only in downtown Long Beach and in downtown LA, bypassing all stations along the Harbor Transitway. As a direct replacement for the Blue Line, this service will be priced similarly at the base fare of \$1.75.~~ This express will operate Monday through Friday only during the peak periods.

Additionally, staff has met with and garnered input from the Cities of Compton, Long Beach and Los Angeles to ensure that planning efforts are coordinated seamlessly. Discussions with the cities included but were not limited to the following service related topics:

- Improving bus service between rail service, as well as maintaining connections with all rail stations and key destinations
- Coordinating with affected municipal operators to improve system connectivity, inter-agency transfers, customer safety and experience
- Employing strategies such as all-door boarding to improve on-time performance
- Developing outreach materials to market, promote, and outreach to Blue Line riders about supplemental transit services

### Community Outreach

The Communications Department has developed a robust community outreach plan that includes various methods for communicating about the modernization project to diverse audiences. The plan includes bus, rail, print and social media ads; station signage; banners; inclusion in community presentations; email blasts; press releases; web and social media posts; articles in Metro’s blog, *The*

*Source*; fact sheets; flyers to neighboring communities; station and operator announcements; and information booths at community events along the Blue Line corridor.

Staff has already begun educating key stakeholders and the public at a high level, and the plan will roll out in a more detailed fashion six months before the project begins.

### Findings

A Title VI Equity Analysis is not required for temporary service and fare changes. Therefore, the proposed services and fares are consistent with FTA's guidance and Metro's Major Service Change and Fare Change policies (Chapter 2-50 Administrative Code).

### FINANCIAL IMPACT

The cost of the replacement bus service is included in the Board adopted FY19 budget. Submission of this Receive and File report will not have a negative financial impact FY19 Budget.

### ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The alternative to the proposed staff recommendation is to only supplement the Blue Line rail service with the traditional Local "Bus Bridge" Shuttle. Not implementing the full array of replacement transit services is not recommended, as customers would not benefit from the expedited travel options these services provide.

### NEXT STEPS

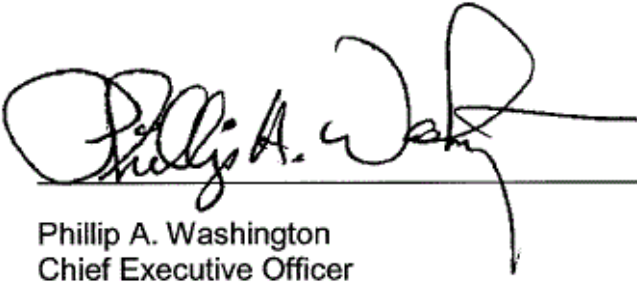
Staff will continue the scheduled construction mitigation outreach efforts to alert impacted cities, municipal operators, and stakeholders of the need, benefit and goal of the Blue Line modernization work. As well as, provide the public with information regarding the construction impacts, project updates and transit service availability.

### ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - New Blue Outreach Plan

Prepared by: Medford Auguste, Sr. Transportation Planner, (213) 922-4814  
Conan Cheung, Sr. Executive Officer, (213) 418-3034

Reviewed by: Jim Gallagher, Chief Operations Officer, (213) 418-3108



Phillip A. Washington  
Chief Executive Officer