



## Board Report

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### OPERATIONS, SAFETY & CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE OCTOBER 15, 2020

**SUBJECT: MICROTRANSIT OPERATIONS**

**ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS**

**RECOMMENDATION**

AUTHORIZE the Chief Executive Officer to:

- A. APPROVE the proposed MicroTransit Fare Structure
- B. APPROVE adjustments to Service Zones per the NextGen Bus Plan

**ISSUE**

- A. Approve the proposed MicroTransit Fare Structure

Metro staff seeks approval of the proposed fare structure including introductory pricing for our new on-demand service, MicroTransit.

In May 2020, Operations assembled an internal working group to develop a recommendation on the MicroTransit Fare Structure.

Participants represented the following departments and business units:

- Office of Civil Rights
- Office of Marketing and Commute Services
- Office of Equity and Race
- Office of Management and Budget
- Transit Access Pass (TAP)
- System Security and Law Enforcement
- Women and Girls Governing Council
- MicroTransit Operations

The working group aimed to identify a fare structure that was consistent with Metro's current offerings and similar to regional operators such as our paratransit provider Access Services.

As such, Metro staff recommends the full price to be set at \$2.50 per trip, aligned with the fare

structure of the Silver Line. As a new on-demand service, MicroTransit is similarly priced to Access Services rates which are \$2.75 per trip for trips up to 19.9 miles and \$3.50 for trips more than 20 miles. MicroTransit trips have been deemed as eligible for National Transit Database 5307 demand-responsive reporting.

In light of the impacts of COVID-19 on our communities, Metro staff recommends a discount be applied for the first six months of Revenue Service Operations for each service zone launched in calendar years 2020 and 2021. As such, the introductory cost of each MicroTransit trip will be \$1.00 for all customers and will not include a transfer. MicroTransit passes will be sold at the introductory price in all MicroTransit service zones.

Operations staff will report back on a proposed timeline for the implementation of full fare 120 days following the launch of Revenue Service Operations.

**B. Approve adjustments to Service Zones per the NextGen Bus Plan**

MicroTransit Service Zones as approved at the February 2020 Board Meeting continue to be adjusted to support the buildout of Metro's NextGen Bus Plan.

Initial operations for MicroTransit will consist of up to a 12-hour service span, up to 7 days per week. Upon launch, hours of operation will be 7am-6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 4pm on Saturday and Sunday in the Watts/Willowbrook service zone and 5am to 10am and 2pm to 7pm Monday to Friday in the LAX/Inglewood service zone.

MicroTransit is featured within Metro's NextGen Bus Plan recommendations and was presented as part of Metro's public hearings held in August 2020.

**BACKGROUND**

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in new travel patterns across our fixed-route transit network, Metro staff is preparing for the roll out of MicroTransit Operations in alignment with Metro's NextGen Bus Plan.

By design, MicroTransit is a flexible transit service built in alignment and synchronization with our NextGen Bus Plan. The goals of the service are to retain and to grow ridership for Metro while improving the customer experience for current and future riders of the Metro network.

As approved in February 2020, the agency's on-demand service will allow Metro customers to order trips on the new service and to connect to our bus routes and train lines using internet browsers, mobile applications and our in-house call center. MicroTransit has been planned to address systemic ridership losses by investing and prioritizing customer experience elements such as public safety, cleanliness, and responding directly to the needs of how women and girls travel on our system. MicroTransit will make rideshare a viable mode for many communities which may not be able to afford the cost of privately operated services.

Metro staff is currently preparing to launch MicroTransit in the six unique service areas listed below:

- Watts/Willowbrook
- LAX/Inglewood

- Northwest San Fernando Valley
- Highland Park/Eagle Rock/Glendale
- Altadena/Pasadena/Sierra Madre
- UCLA/Westwood/Century City

Operations staff has closely monitored the COVID-19 pandemic and has adjusted the MicroTransit service model in order to safely operate while still serving the transportation needs of vulnerable populations and disadvantaged communities. Operations will fully comply with all safety protocols to ensure that the risk of COVID-19 is minimized for both employees and customers.

In an effort to adjust and respond to evolving State and County directives, Operations staff ran on-street testing in this new operating environment. Testing was run with virtual customers and Metro employees in partnership with technology partner RideCo and vehicle partner Access Services in the summer of 2020. Additional testing will be conducted throughout the fall.

The technology being utilized and developed in this pilot continues to be a highly effective means to adjust public transit to be responsive to an evolving operational environment, including essential trips.

Revenue Service Operations remain on track to launch in December 2020 in the Watts/Willowbrook and LAX/Inglewood service zones.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The revenue and funding sources will be finalized during future budget processes.

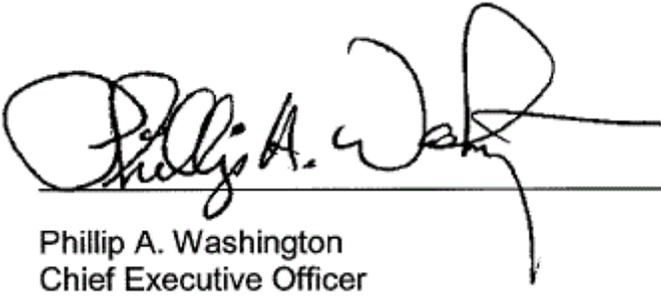
### **NEXT STEPS**

MicroTransit Operations will continue to advance at pace with our NextGen Bus Plan. As a tool of NextGen, MicroTransit will be reviewed and service zones potentially reconfigured to best support the roll out of our systemwide changes to transit operations

Metro staff will continue to pursue funding at local, state and federal levels as well as sponsorship, private financing and related methods for revenue generation.

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