



Board Report

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PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE NOVEMBER 18, 2020

SUBJECT: EAST SAN FERNANDO VALLEY LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT FIRST/LAST MILE PLAN

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION

CONSIDER:

1. ADOPTING East San Fernando Valley Light Rail Transit First/Last Mile Plan (Attachment A);
and
2. DIRECTING staff to return to the Board with implementation recommendations following completion of the First/Last Mile Guidelines.

ISSUE

Board Motion 14.1 (May 2016) directed staff to undertake first/last mile (FLM) planning for future Metro transit projects. The East San Fernando Valley Light Rail Transit (ESFVLRT) FLM Plan (Plan) (Attachment A; link - <http://media.metro.net/2020/ESFVLRT-FLM-Plan-Final-November-2020.pdf>) was completed following the Metro FLM methodology per the 2014 First Last Mile Strategic Plan. Prioritization of projects within the Plan is based on connectivity, safety, and equity, among other factors described further in this report. Inclusion of potential FLM improvements in an adopted plan better positions the projects for grant funding opportunities.

BACKGROUND

The Plan recommends FLM projects for the 14 ESFVLRT stations located in the City of Los Angeles and the City of San Fernando. To develop the plan, staff followed the FLM methodology, which includes these steps:

- Existing conditions and relevant plans / projects review
- Walk audits of station areas
- Community engagement
- Draft and final pathway networks and project ideas
- Ongoing coordination with local jurisdictions

The Plan casts a wide net to identify pedestrian projects in the ½-mile radius around each station and

for wheel (bicycle, scooter, and other rolling modes) projects in the 3-mile radius around each station to improve safety, access, and comfort. The Plan was prepared by a consultant team that included two community-based organizations in the area: Pacoima Beautiful and Safe Moves. Pacoima Beautiful is a grassroots environmental justice organization that provides education, impacts public policy, and supports local arts and culture for all to promote a healthy and sustainable community. Safe Moves is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating children, teens, and parents about traffic safety, and empowering them to practice safe walking, bicycling and driving habits. Both organizations helped develop the community engagement approach and aided in reaching the community to solicit input on project ideas and prioritization.

The Plan includes two documents that represent core planning products:

- Pathway Maps with Projects, Prioritization Matrices, and Costs
- Three-Mile Wheel Projects Network Memo

The Plan also includes documents and memos that summarize the process and support the two documents above:

- Prioritization Methodology Memo
- Local Jurisdiction Coordination Summary
- Community Outreach Memo
- Walk Audit Results Memo
- Existing Conditions / Review of Plans and Projects Memo

To aid in deliverability of FLM projects, the projects were prioritized based on safety, accessibility, and community input factors.

It should be noted that the ESFVLRT necessitates changes to Van Nuys Blvd. to accommodate the light rail transit and that there are right-of-way constraints on Van Nuys Blvd. This Plan proposes project ideas that complement the planned ESFVLRT.

DISCUSSION

Process and Coordination

Following Metro's FLM planning methodology, this Plan was developed through detailed analysis of existing plans and conditions for walking and bicycling modes. The Plan was developed to ensure close integration of the proposed FLM projects and the ESFVLRT station design.

A key component of developing an FLM plan is robust input from the community. For this Plan, the goals of community engagement were twofold: 1) to inform the community about Metro's FLM program; and 2) to facilitate community participation and gather community knowledge to form FLM project ideas. The team deployed a multi-faceted approach to accomplish these goals, including community participation in walk audits, four workshops at locations throughout the transit corridor, "coffee with the principal" events at local schools, and a survey. The workshops were widely publicized as described in the Plan (Attachment A, see "Community Outreach Memo" section). Additionally, 447 survey responses were collected.

Because FLM projects are typically located in city-controlled right of way, coordination with local jurisdictions on project types, locations, community engagement, and implementation considerations is another critical component of the FLM process. The project team coordinated with City of Los Angeles and City of San Fernando including multiple city departments and elected offices to develop the Plan and review the FLM projects in the Plan. Additional coordination with both jurisdictions will be necessary to continue to advance FLM projects and priorities. More details are provided in the Plan (Attachment A, see “Local Jurisdiction Coordination Summary” section).

Prioritization

This Plan was completed in advance of the FLM Guidelines, which will formalize standards and process for advancing FLM improvements alongside transit corridor delivery. Therefore, the approach to project prioritization for this Plan were developed by staff as a pilot approach, in consultation with the City of Los Angeles and City of San Fernando. As with other recently completed FLM plans for transit corridor projects, the staff recommends returning to the Board for consideration of next steps once the FLM Guidelines are complete.

Multiple factors were considered to prioritize the FLM improvements in the Plan, including: safety, accessibility, community input, and continuity of the pedestrian and bicycle network. The approach also accounted for coverage of Metro Board-adopted Equity Focus Communities (EFCs) within a given station area along with the geographic overlap of adjacent ½-mile walksheds and input from local jurisdictions. See Selected Projects List (Attachment B) for details on the methodology.

EQUITY PLATFORM:

Three pillars from the Equity Platform were addressed as follows:

- I. Define and Measure: Through community engagement during the walk audits and development of the pathway network, the team was able to utilize community feedback to inform the project ideas and locations.
- II. Listen and Learn: The plan was informed by conversation and relationships with two community-based organizations in the east San Fernando Valley: Pacoima Beautiful and Safe Moves. These two organizations were part of the project team and were instrumental in engaging the community on FLM project ideas.
- III. Focus and Deliver: Metro Equity Focus Communities (EFCs) was one factor that was utilized in FLM project selection.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

The recommended action has no direct safety impact. This Plan, along with all FLM planning activities, focuses on identifying projects that address safety issues for people walking, biking or rolling to the future ESFVLRT transit stations.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

- Adoption of this plan has no impact on the budget.

Staff is developing FLM Guidelines and will seek future Board action on next steps consistent with the Guidelines.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The recommended actions further two Strategic Plan goals including:

- *Goal #2:* Outstanding trip experiences for all - Projects in the Plan will improve customers' experiences accessing the future stations by walking, biking or other rolling modes.
- *Goal #4:* Transform LA County through collaboration and leadership - Metro is uniquely positioned to facilitate coordination between jurisdictions for FLM projects that span jurisdictional boundaries.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board could decide not to adopt the Plan, which is not recommended for two reasons:

- 1) Previous Board action (FLM Policy, 2016) directed that FLM projects be incorporated into transit corridor project delivery; and
- 2) Inclusion of potential FLM improvements in an adopted plan better positions the projects for grant funding opportunities.

NEXT STEPS

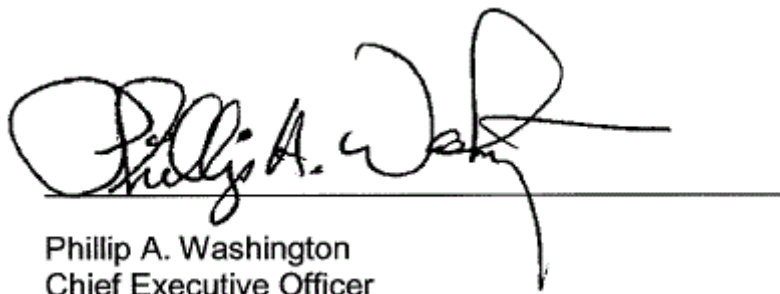
As mentioned above, staff will return to the Board with recommended next steps concurrent with or following adoption of the FLM Guidelines.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - ESFVLRRT FLM Plan
Attachment B - Prioritized Projects List

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