



Board Report

File #: 2022-0305, **File Type:** Motion / Motion Response

Agenda Number: 31.

OPERATIONS, SAFETY, AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE JUNE 16, 2022

SUBJECT: ACCESS TO CAREER OPPORTUNITIES UPDATE

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE the report back to Motion 21, Access to Career Opportunities.

ISSUE

This report provides an update on actions taken by the Metro Staff, in collaboration with the community, education, and workforce partners, to increase access to career opportunities for residents in communities located along and near future transit projects.

BACKGROUND

At its March 2022 meeting, the Board approved Motion 21 by Directors Hahn, Solis, Dutra, Dupont-Walker, Krekorian, and Mitchell (Attachment A) for Metro staff to form a working group with community-based partners to discuss training opportunities in transit project construction, transit operations, and pre-apprenticeships/apprenticeships. Motion 21 also specifically mentions Workforce Initiative Now - Los Angeles (WIN-LA) as an existing program to be leveraged.

WIN-LA is Metro's workforce development program that focuses on creating career pathways in the transportation industry. WIN-LA career pathways consist of: construction, operations and maintenance, administration, and professional services. The program targets disadvantaged communities and populations experiencing barriers to employment, including homeless individuals, those receiving public assistance, formerly incarcerated individuals, and more. WIN-LA partners with America's Job Centers of California (AJCC) for participants to receive additional services. These AJCC sites provide broad geographic access across all of Los Angeles County and serve those residents most in need who may be unemployed or underemployed. WIN-LA's first two cohorts produced 44 placements and a promotion rate within Metro of 62%. Of those hired, 88% self-identified as at least one of the following categories: homeless, single custodial parent, receiving public assistance, formerly incarcerated, disconnected foster youth, veteran or unemployed at time of program entry.

DISCUSSION

Metro has begun to address these efforts by focusing on two areas, 1) forming a working group to begin discussions for the establishment of future skills-based courses to ensure curricula align with Metro requirements, including the need for bilingual employees and provide skills-based Certificates upon completion; and 2) seeking State and federal funding to support the development of career pathways. The following is the status of our efforts to date.

Working Group

Metro staff convened two Access to Career Opportunities Work Group meetings, an initial meeting on Friday, April 29, 2022, and a subsequent meeting on Friday, June 3, 2022.

Workgroup members include those Workforce Development Boards operating within the county, including WDACS, community colleges such as LATTC and Rio Hondo College, and other community-based organizations, including Chrysalis and First Place for Youth. This body has committed to working collectively to:

- Inventory existing transportation workforce programs, partnerships, and agreements
- Identify funding opportunities that support training
- Modify existing curriculum where appropriate
- Create a new curriculum that leads to certificates where appropriate

The goal is to reach long-term resource stability for regional workforce development and thoughtfully approach resource allocation across Los Angeles County.

Outcomes from these initial meetings include the development of new workforce mapping tools, a review of existing partnerships and agreements to see what can be easily leveraged or expanded, and a commitment to move the WIN-LA training for new cohorts from downtown LA to LATTC campus to other college campuses around the county. The workgroup will continue to meet quarterly.

Funding

At Metro's Transportation Gateway/Next Generation Workforce Programs Department April 2022 Quarterly External Partners meeting, Metro discussed multiple grant opportunities with local community colleges. Out of this April 2022 meeting, two funding solicitations were identified as near-term opportunities.

Metro is supporting a grant application from Cerritos College for the California Apprenticeships Initiative that was submitted in April. This solicitation would provide funding to support Maintenance of Way apprenticeship training.

Metro's WIN-LA team is working with community partners to identify an appropriate project for submission to the High Road Training Partnerships (H RTP) funding pool. The staff has met with previous applicants to discuss the scope of previously funded projects. The H RTP accepts applications on a rolling, quarterly basis. Metro staff are targeting submission of a project through a community partner in Q3 or Q4 of 2022.

EQUITY PLATFORM

The Access to Career Opportunities Motion calls for focused career opportunities for residents in communities located along and near future transit projects. The West Santa Ana Branch, East San Fernando Valley, Gold Line Eastside and Foothill Extensions will bring new transit and transit-related career opportunities to Southeast Los Angeles County, the San Fernando Valley, Gateway Cities, the San Gabriel Valley and beyond. Each of these transit projects include economically disadvantaged areas, defined as ZIP codes where medium household income is \$40,000 or less. Many of these communities do not have locally based workforce training opportunities for transportation. Metro is committing to working with community colleges to provide industry-based trainings in economically disadvantaged areas.

The actions of the work group will ensure that future industry-related training opportunities will be developed with an equity lens addressing both geographic and socioeconomic barriers. The work group will support in the identification and deployment of resources to make select workforce training opportunities available in identified, disadvantaged communities along and near future transit lines.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The recommendation supports strategic plan Goal 3 (Initiative 3.1) as Metro will enhance communities and lives through mobility and access to opportunity by lifting local communities and creating jobs and career pathways in transportation.

NEXT STEPS

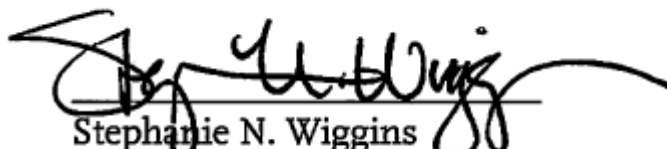
Staff will continue convening the Access to Career Opportunities working group to ensure overall regional alignment on transportation-based training and employment opportunities. We will also continue to research funding sources to assist with addressing these efforts.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Motion 21 Board Report

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