Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation
Authority
One Gateway Plaza
3rd Floor Board Room
Los Angeles, CA

File #: 2026-0689, **File Type:** Motion / Motion Response **Agenda Number:** 29.

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 17, 2026

Motion by:

DIRECTORS BASS, DUPONT-WALKER, RICHARDSON, MITCHELL, SOLIS AND SANDOVAL

Keeping Metro Affordable, Expanding Metro's Subsidized Fare and Fareless Programs Motion

A significant portion of Los Angeles County riders are transit dependent and rely on public transportation to access jobs, education, health care, and other essential services. For many low-income households, the cost of transportation remains a significant barrier to mobility and can place additional pressure on household budgets already affected by high housing and living costs.

As one of the nation's leading transit agencies, Metro has made affordability a priority by developing programs that lower the cost for eligible riders.

Metro has established several targeted fare programs as a bridge to fareless, to reduce these barriers, including the Low-Income-Fare-is-Easy (LIFE) Program and the GoPass Fareless Pilot Program to achieve this goal. Approximately 80 percent of Metro riders qualify for at least one of Metro's existing reduced or free fare programs, providing a strong foundation for making transit more affordable. For those who rely most heavily on public transportation, it is critical that we continue expanding access to affordable transit across our region. As many of our communities continue to recover from the impacts of the pandemic, reducing the cost of transit for eligible riders can encourage more frequent transit use, strengthen connections to employment and education, and support the region's goals of reducing congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.

Metro should build on these existing subsidized fare programs with the goal of increasing enrollment and usage by at least 30 percent. This expansion should prioritize identifying and reaching eligible riders who are not currently participating, reducing barriers to enrollment and use, and strengthening partnerships with universities, community colleges, foster youth-serving organizations, and community-based organizations to ensure eligible students and young people are connected to available fare reduced programs. Metro should also increase the enrollment in our employer program whereby companies subsidize the fares of their employees. Expanding employer participation can further Metro's broader goal of increasing ridership.

A 30 percent expansion of all programs should be accompanied by an assessment of the resources necessary to sustain increased participation, including potential federal, state, local, philanthropic, and other funding sources and fare recovery. Metro should also evaluate opportunities to make

existing programs easier to access and use through TAP technology, integration with other public benefit programs, and expanded outreach.

SUBJECT: KEEPING METRO AFFORDABLE, EXPANDING METRO'S SUBSIDIZED FARE AND FARELESS PROGRAMS MOTION

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE Motion by Bass, Dupont-Walker, Richardson, Mitchell, Solis and Sandoval to direct the CEO to:

A. DEVELOP a plan to increase participation in Metro's subsidized fare and fareless programs by at least 30 percent, including the LIFE Program, GoPass, U-Pass, the Employer Program and all existing programs that provide free or reduced-cost transit to eligible riders. The plan should include strategies to increase employer participation and encourage more employers to subsidize or provide free or reduced-cost transit with their employees;

B. REPORT BACK to the Board within 90 days with recommendations for achieving the 30 percent expansion for calendar year 2027, including but not limited to;

1. Current enrollment and utilization levels for each subsidized or fareless fare program;
2. An assessment of eligible riders consistent with an equity lens who are not currently enrolled or regularly utilizing available benefits;
3. Strategies to increase enrollment, retention, and utilization;
4. Identification of administrative, technological, or other barriers to participation;
5. Opportunities to simplify enrollment and eligibility verification;
6. Opportunities to expand digital access to fare benefits through the TAP app and other TAP system enhancements;
7. Recommendations for measuring the impact of the expansion on ridership, customer access, public safety, and other relevant outcomes.
8. Gather data that analyzes the demographics and ridership in the City of Los Angeles, the 87 cities, and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County;
9. An assessment of the resources necessary to sustain increased participation, including potential federal, state, local, philanthropic, and other funding sources and fare recovery;

powered by Legistar™

C. EXPAND outreach and enrollment efforts, in coordination with community-based organizations, schools, local governments, social service agencies, and other community partners, with an emphasis on reaching eligible residents who are not currently participating in Metro's subsidized fare programs; and

D. ANALYZE the 2021 Fareless System Initiative Study to identify opportunities for potential implementation, including consideration of operational, financial, equity, and regional impacts.