



## Board Report

**File #:** 2015-1384, **File Type:** Informational Report

**Agenda Number:** 8.

### AD-HOC SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE OCTOBER 14, 2015

**SUBJECT: DRAFT URBAN GREENING PLAN UPDATE**

**ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

RECEIVE AND FILE report on Metro's completed **Urban Greening Plan for Park and Ride Lots and Station Areas**.

#### **ISSUE**

A draft of Metro's Urban Greening Plan has been completed.

#### **DISCUSSION**

##### Background

The Metro Board authorized filing of a grant application for an Urban Greening Plan by resolution adopted on December 15, 2011. Metro received a grant from the State Strategic Growth Council to develop an Urban Greening Plan for Park and Ride Lots and Station Areas. The City of Los Angeles (LADOT) and TreePeople partnered with Metro on the application for funding. Both of these organizations are Project Partners on the project team and provide technical expertise and resources. In fall 2014, surveys and focus groups were conducted. Survey results on community perspectives indicated that greening and placemaking activities could increase ridership especially through increased education and awareness. An analysis of greening need and opportunity at park and ride lots and around transit stations was also conducted in fall 2014. This analysis is available online and determined that identifying opportunity areas for greening depends on multiple factors beyond existing conditions including the planning and policy context.

##### Process

Metro Sustainability staff coordinated among Metro parking, environmental compliance, art, facilities, landscaping and maintenance and real estate departments to identify best practices currently underway at Metro as well as opportunity areas for future efforts. In addition to internal coordination, Metro convened a Technical Advisory Committee to help guide development of the Plan. Regional and local agencies, environmental and placemaking community groups as well as key Metro staff comprise the TAC membership. The discussion at the TAC meetings centered around three key areas as they relate to greening and placemaking: education, community engagement, and

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interagency coordination. The TAC discussion indicated that the TAC viewed the Urban Greening Plan as a mechanism for local stakeholders to collaborate on greening and placemaking projects as well as a resource to prioritize local efforts. The TAC provided input and guidance to refine the specific greening and placemaking tools and also contributed resources for inclusion in the plan. Throughout the TAC process, staff has brought regular status to the Ad Hoc Sustainability Committee, including at the July 2015 meeting.

Through the development of the Plan, the TAC members and project team identified the need to provide an online toolkit. The online toolkit facilitates use for public agencies, interested organizations and the community. The draft Urban Greening Plan is presented as a website called Metro's Green Places. The Green Places website provides context, resources, and greening and placemaking tools for a variety of audiences in Los Angeles County including public agency staff, greening and placemaking community based organizations, Metro staff and interested communities.

A forum was held on October 1, 2015 to bring together countywide stakeholders and solicit feedback on Metro's Green Places website. At the forum, attendees experienced firsthand how the website will function and how they could access the relevant greening and placemaking tools. Those who attended the forum also had an opportunity to network with one another and explore possible partnership and funding options.

A few key themes emerged through the development of the plan. Metro plays a unique role in the county and is positioned to facilitate partnerships to enhance the environment and communities near Metro transit stations. Through current efforts and initiatives such as First and Last Mile Planning, Transit-Oriented Communities, Active Transportation Strategic Plan, Complete Streets, Bike Share, among others, Metro aims to improve transit riders' experience as well as add multiple and complimentary benefits to transit projects in the community. In addition to Metro's current sustainability projects, the greening and placemaking tools of the Green Places website could further add to the benefits of transit in the region.

### Benefits

As noted above, the Urban Greening Plan and Toolkit has a number of associated benefits including providing information resources and a format for collaboration. Implementation of greening and placemaking approaches highlighted in the Plan have the potential to improve the overall transit experience and boost ridership along with supporting other agency goals related to environmental stewardship and sustainability.

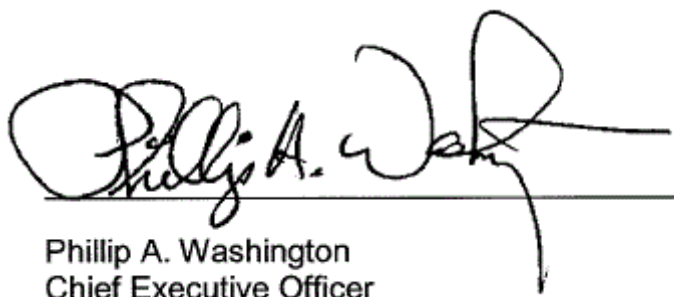
### **NEXT STEPS**

In the future, Metro's Green Places plan could be utilized by Metro and others to pursue pilot projects, grants or other funding, and strategic partnerships. Through discussions with agencies and organizations throughout LA County, staff has started to lay the groundwork for future partnerships and is researching possible funding opportunities.

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