



Board Report

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OPERATIONS, SAFETY AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE JULY 19, 2018

SUBJECT: METRO TRANSFERS DESIGN GUIDE (2018)

ACTION: ORAL REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE oral update on Metro Transfers Design Guide.

DISCUSSION

Overview

Metro has prepared the Metro Transfers Design [Guide <https://bit.ly/2HGgHiw>](https://bit.ly/2HGgHiw) (Guide), a best practices document with recommendations to improve connectivity for transit customers who transfer as part of their trip. This document builds off of the First/Last Mile Strategic Plan (2014) with recommendations to improve the customer experience for the “complete transit journey.” This Guide will serve as a resource for Metro staff, local transit providers, and local jurisdictions to inform the design of stations, bus stops, street improvements, and service planning so that transfers are safe, accessible, convenient, and comfortable for Metro customers. This document will also help guide future strategic planning efforts to ensure that connectivity is a priority for Metro.

Context

Almost two-thirds of Metro customers transfer as part of their transit journey. This number grows when transfers between local and regional transit providers are included. Convenient transfers are essential to providing quality service to Metro’s customers and growing ridership. Metro’s current planning and design standards and processes focus on transit modes (e.g. bus, rail) separately and do not fully address connectivity between transit corridors and modes. With changing mobility patterns and demographics, increased development in the region, and Metro’s ambitious expansion plans under Measure M, there is an opportunity to update Metro’s goals and inform standards and practices to prioritize connectivity and the customer experience for future corridor planning, station design, and infrastructure improvements.

Planning Process

To develop the Guide, Metro interviewed customers through a series of focus groups to understand their overall trip and experiences when transferring. Four focus groups (facilitated in English and Spanish) were held in three locations across Los Angeles County and included participants selected through a screening process to reflect the demographics of Metro’s riders. In discussing their “perfect

transfer experience,” several themes emerged on areas for improvement, which included:

- better signage and wayfinding between transfer points (e.g. real-time signage, audio announcements, directional signs);
- access enhancements (e.g. sidewalk improvements, well maintained elevators);
- comfortable, clean, and secure bus stops and station environments to wait for the next bus or train (e.g. seating, shade, lighting); and
- service improvements to shorten one’s trip (e.g. more frequent headways, on-time performance) and simplified transfer fares and payment methods.

Metro also studied best practices from around the world, surveyed transit facilities within Los Angeles County, analyzed ridership and safety data, and gathered input from local jurisdictions, local transit providers, advisory groups, and Metro staff. The input Metro received from the focus groups and other stakeholders is summarized in the Guide (pages 23-25). Through the interviews and background research, Metro developed a list of guiding principles to define the idea of a good transfer, which includes: safety and security, efficiency, accessibility, clarity, comfort, and consistency.

To address the customer experience, the recommendations in the Guide are organized around three key behaviors for riders who transfer:

- making decisions;
- moving between transit vehicles; and
- waiting to board.

Recommendations focus on improving the design of the “transfer zone,” which is defined as a 500 foot diameter around rail or bus rapid transit (“BRT”) stations, and/or a cluster of connecting sidewalk stops adjacent to an intersection. Most transfers occur within the public right-of-way (e.g. streets and sidewalks), which Metro does not control, or a station (property owned or leased by a transit agency). Thus, the need for coordination between agencies is a common theme throughout the document.

To improve the design of transfer zones, the Guide offers:

- 1) a *process-oriented* Design Checklist to inform decision-making and priority-setting for transit corridors, bus stops, and rail stations;
- 2) a *flexible* Design Toolbox to respond to a diverse set of transit conditions across Los Angeles County; and
- 3) a concise set of Application Strategies to apply the guiding principles and design considerations in the document to inform Metro projects, guide future policies, and share improvement ideas with local jurisdictions and transit operators.

The Guide is intended to be a resource for staff at Metro and partner agencies to:

- 1) inform Metro station design, transit corridor planning, and first/last mile improvements;
- 2) ensure that connectivity and customer experience are key considerations for Metro’s strategic planning efforts (e.g. *Long Range Plan, 10 Year Strategic Plan, NextGen Bus Study*), which will set long-term priorities for transit improvements across Los Angeles County; and
- 3) encourage coordination and partnerships with local transit providers and jurisdictions when making improvements to transfer zones.

Planned Outreach

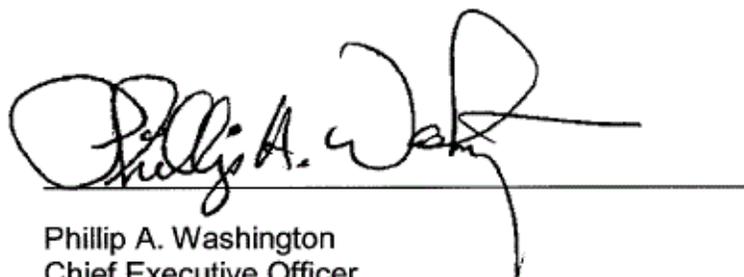
Staff will distribute the Guide within Metro to serve as a resource for current transit planning efforts and broader policy discussions. Staff will also perform outreach with local jurisdictions, stakeholders and other transit providers to share the document with local partners and pursue inter-agency efforts to deploy best practices.

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