



Board Report

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Agenda Number: 18.

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
APRIL 20, 2023**

SUBJECT: END OF LINE POLICY MOTION RESPONSE

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE the report back on:

- A. Metro's End of Line Policy and strategies to better serve unhoused riders at end of line stations and regional coordination efforts;
- B. Potential benefits to Metro resulting from an emergency declaration; and
- C. Strategies to increase interim housing on Metro property.

ISSUE

In October 2022, the Metro Board adopted Motion 20 by Directors Hahn, Najarian, Solis, Barger, Dutra, and Krekorian (Attachment A) that directed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to evaluate Metro's End of Line policy and its impacts on communities that have a station at the end of a Metro rail line. The motion also directed staff to work with the regional social service leads, the County, and LAHSA on strategies to address homelessness on the transit system. In February 2023, the Metro Board adopted Motion 28 by Directors Bass, Hahn, Najarian, Mitchell, Solis, and Krekorian that directed a report back on strategies to streamline the production of temporary housing. This report provides a status update on the progress of the end of line evaluation, regional coordination efforts, potential benefits of an emergency declaration, and strategies to increase interim housing on Metro property.

BACKGROUND

The most recent available data from the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) 2022 Point in Time Count estimates that 69,144 people are experiencing homelessness throughout LA County, an increase of 4.1% since 2020 (Attachment B). In 2022, Metro estimated that there are 800 people experiencing homelessness sheltering on the system on any given night. The City of Long Beach, which conducts a separate annual point-in-time count, identified 3,296 people experiencing homelessness in their local jurisdiction in 2022. In January 2023, LAHSA conducted its annual point-in-time count, which included Metro's highest impacted rail and bus stations. The 2023 count data will be released later this year.

Addressing the homelessness crisis on transit continues to be a top priority for Metro and the local

jurisdictions within Metro’s service area. The County of Los Angeles and the cities of Los Angeles, Santa Monica, and Long Beach declared homelessness a State of Emergency to expedite the review and approval process of interim and permanent housing projects and to deliver housing solutions and supportive housing services more quickly.

On January 26, 2023, staff provided the board with the preliminary status update on the end of line evaluation. The report introduced initial strategies to improve Metro’s coordination with local jurisdictions on homeless response, including resources available to serve people experiencing homelessness (PEH) at end of line stations during late-night hours when the system closes, and trains go out of service for required maintenance and cleaning.

The Board adopted Motion 19.1 in January 2023 by Directors Sandoval, Solis, Bass, Najarian, Hahn, and Horvath (Attachment C), directing the CEO to examine full-service outreach models for end of line stations, support for recent emergency declarations, and to update Metro’s inventory of properties that are vacant or underutilized. In February 2023, the Board adopted Motion 31 by Directors Hahn, Bass, Solis, and Dutra (Attachment D), directing the CEO to engage LAHSA, the County CEO Homeless Initiative, and local jurisdictions on the implementation of a navigation service hub.

DISCUSSION

In January 2023, Metro commenced an evaluation at Metro end of line stations and an assessment of impacts on nearby local communities. This evaluation included point-in-time counts of PEH at the end of line rail stations and a demographic survey to better identify the need for social services to support unhoused riders. The point-in-time count and survey data were collected at the end of line rail station as the last two trains were being cleared at the end of rail service operations. The nightly count and survey were conducted between midnight to 2:00 a.m. over the course of five nights.

End of Line Survey and Point-in-Time Count Key Findings

As of April 7, 2023, staff completed point-in-time counts and demographic surveys for 12 of 13 End of Line Metro Rail Stations. Attachment E summarizes the data collected and highlights the stations with the highest observations of people experiencing homelessness. This evaluation was conducted from December 2022 - April 2023.

<i>Rail Corridor</i>	<i>Station</i>	<i>Point in Time Count (Avg Count of PEH/night)</i>	<i>Total Number of PEH Surveyed</i>	<i>Interested in S Housing</i>	<i>Homeless 1 year or more</i>
B/D Line (Red/Purple)	7 th Street/Metro Center	93	30	77%	73%
A Line (Blue)	Downtown Long Beach	39	44	66%	50%
B Line (Red)	Union Station	137	30	63%	80%
B Line (Red)	North Hollywood	112	56	80%	80%
D Line (Purple)	Wilshire/Western	55	8	38%	88%
C Line (Green)	Redondo Beach	17	26	73%	69%
C Line (Green)	Norwalk	18	17	47%	71%
E Line (Expo)	Downtown Santa Monica	59	46	65%	70%

L Line (Gold)	APU/Citrus College	17	41	66%	41%
L Line (Gold)	Atlantic	4	11	64%	55%
L Line (Gold)	Pico Aliso		Not completed. Survey/Count Scheduled May 2023.		
K Line (Crenshaw)	Expo/Crenshaw	2	7	86%	71%
K Line (Crenshaw)	Westchester/Veterans	2	5	40%	80%
Total Average PEH Observed at 12 End of Line Stations		555	Total PEH Surveyed		321

Metro B/D (Red/Purple) Line stations the highest reported PEH offloading at end of line stations. Union Station, North Hollywood, and 7th Street/Metro Center Station are significant “hot spots” for homelessness between midnight - 3:00 am.

- Union Station has the highest reported PEH at the end of service, with a nightly average of 137 individuals observed.
- North Hollywood Station receives 112 PEH on average nightly at the end of service.
- 7th Street/Metro Center data shows 93 PEH on average nightly at the end of service nightly.

This data will be useful for the County, local jurisdictions, and the Service Planning Areas (SPA) to plan social services and resource allocation better. It will also help to coordinate future LAHSA point-in-time counts. The survey data collected will be shared with LAHSA and the affected local jurisdictions for further evaluation. As noted in Attachment B (2022 LAHSA Point in Time Count Data), Service Planning Area (SPA) 4 has the highest concentration of unsheltered homelessness in LA County, with 13,047 people experiencing homelessness on a given night.

- SPA 4 includes the Downtown Los Angeles Metropolitan Area, where Union Station and 7th Street/Metro Center end of line stations are located.

Metro surveyed a total of 321 people experiencing homelessness during the five-day evaluation period.

- Most individuals surveyed were single adults, and the survey data indicates that over 80% are male.

Unhoused Metro riders on board trains going out of service are more likely to be open to moving inside, off of Metro trains, if shelter or services are available. There is a common misconception that people experiencing homelessness are resistant to services and housing - that is not the case with people experiencing homelessness on Metro. Staff notes that individuals surveyed experienced a broad range of homelessness, from newly homeless and housing insecure (unhoused for less than 30 days, sleeping on friends/families’ couches, in seek of stable housing), to chronic homelessness, with some individuals noting that they have experienced homelessness for over ten years. Of the 321 individuals surveyed:

- 64% noted that they were willing and ready to be connected to services and/or housing.
- 69% have experienced unsheltered homelessness within the last 30 days, sleeping in an

outdoor location, such as a city sidewalk, alley, bus stop, or train station.

- 69% have experienced homelessness for at least a year or more.

Peer Review of Transit Agency Strategies and Best Practices

Transit agencies nationwide are facing the impacts of rising homelessness while exploring new strategies to meet the needs of the returning ridership.

SEPTA Strategies:

In March 2023, representatives from Director Hahn's office and Metro staff visited the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) in Philadelphia, PA, to learn about their homeless outreach program, operations control center, and how the agency is addressing the safety and cleanliness at stations that are considered "hot spots." While SEPTA currently contracts with a social service agency to conduct outreach on the system, their representatives made it clear that, first and foremost, they are a transit services provider.

1. Agency prioritizes a coordinated enforcement and outreach response to homelessness.

SEPTA has established SCOPE, (Safety, Cleaning, Ownership, Partnership, and Engagement) to connect PEH with social services and provide a safe, clean transit system for riders and employees.

- The Program includes a combination of strategies, including enhanced enforcement, a cleaning regimen, and homeless outreach.
- Outreach providers focus on hot spot locations and coordinate closely with transit police.
- Utilizes medical students for a "Health Navigator" outreach practicum program.

2. Agency relies heavily on enforcement. SEPTA relies heavily on transit police enforcement of criminal activity, including trespassing at its transit station properties. Loitering in SEPTA station areas is not allowed.

- The agency utilizes a law enforcement and homeless outreach end of line offloading program modeled after Metro's previously enacted "Operation Shelter the Unsheltered."
 - Metro's Operation Shelter the Unsheltered was established at the height of the pandemic to effectively clear trains at the end of line stations throughout the day during service. Following lifting several pandemic-related public health restrictions, security, and outreach staff feedback, the operation concluded in late 2021.

3. Outreach workers are easily identifiable to the public, and their role is clearly defined. It was noted that outreach teams wear brightly colored vests to allow for better recognition of their role and the services available.

- If an individual declines services or assistance, the individual is guided out of the station or subject to transit police citation for fare evasion or trespassing.
- Outreach workers educate PEH that fare payment is required to ride transit during their engagements.
- SEPTA notes that this effort - the process of contacts and removals are directly aligned with a reduction in the number of PEH seeking shelter on the system.
- SEPTA has converted some small, enclosed spaces within transit stations for outreach workers to use as “wellness/intake rooms” for engaging PEH who require privacy and/or intensive assessment.

Staff has determined that some strategies that SEPTA utilizes align with Metro’s current approach to homelessness on the transit system. Staff will further examine the use of transit enforcement strategies to discourage loitering and the feasibility of using wellness rooms at strategic locations within transit stations to deliver better services.

Similar to SEPTA’s Health Navigator student program, Metro is developing a social work student practicum outreach program. To date, staff has contacted several schools of social work, including USC, UCLA, Cal State Northridge, Cal State Dominguez Hills, Cal State Long Beach, and UMass Global, to request a partnership with MSW student field placements at Metro. At this time, USC has expressed interest in a partnership, and staff has meetings scheduled with UMass, Cal State Long Beach, and Cal State Dominguez Hills. Under the supervision of an experienced social worker, staff will integrate MSW interns within the outreach teams to provide them with intensive field practicum experience.

City of Philadelphia Hub of Hope Strategies:

The Metro delegation also visited the City of Philadelphia’s Hub of Hope, a day-time drop-in resource and navigation center open to the public. The hub is open for services Monday-Friday, 6:00 am - 4:00 pm, and is located within a large, converted office space in a subway terminal owned by the City. The hub is managed and operated by a service provider, Project Home, and additional clinical staff.

1. The Hub of Hope offers a full-service solution for increasing access to social services.

The hub services include a full medical clinic offering primary, mental health, and women’s health care services.

- It also includes transportation to local overnight shelters, referrals to interim housing programs, and access to showers, meals, and laundry facilities.
- Project Home staff have established relationships with shelters to reserve a limited number of beds at nearby locations based on specific client needs.

- The hub is only open for services during weekdays until 4:00 pm.

2. The Hub was established in partnership with the local jurisdiction and homeless services agency. The Hub was initially funded through a partnership between SEPTA, the City of Philadelphia, and the City's Homeless Services Agency. SEPTA invested \$3 million for the initial capital project.

- SEPTA does not currently fund the operations of this service hub.
- Project Hub relies on public funding and private support via donations to continue operations.

3. The hub's model has a low barrier to access. PEH can stay in the hub all day without pressure to accept services. Individuals can walk-in and do not require a direct referral from SEPTA or any other agency.

- The hub can accommodate up to 70 people per day, which is the site's current capacity.
- Based on discussions with SEPTA representatives, it was clear that there are no plans to expand services at the Hub.
- A number of PEH congregate around the hub. There is limited service capacity within the facility, and its underground location creates limitations on the ability to make a positive service-delivery environment. The space is a re-purposed subway station location and is not a trauma-informed design space.

The City of Philadelphia Hub model offers an example of a full-service navigation hub that could be replicated in Los Angeles County. Key determinations for feasibility include location, operations (staffing and hours of operations), long-term funding, and capacity.- The Philadelphia Hub of Hope offers a good example of what could be established using existing city property/infrastructure to deliver social services and support within the transit environment.

Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) and New York MTA (NYMTA) Strategies:

Staff also interviewed key personnel at the Bay Area Rapid Transit and New York MTA to determine the agency approaches to addressing homelessness at the end of line stations within their respective service areas. Staff reports a consistent presence of law enforcement and customer service staff, bright lighting at stations, and a high cleanliness standard at the New York City subway stations. Coordinated outreach and law enforcement operations are primarily focused on hot spot stations during late-night hours.

1. BART and NYMTA conduct regular point-in-time counts to estimate the number of PEH sheltering on the transit system.

- BART conducts a monthly hot spot point in time count. BART utilizes the Rail station

survey team to conduct a monthly point-in-time count and observations of PEH on platforms at 16 hot spot stations (the entire rail system is approx. 50 stations). Their average count shows approximately 30 PEH observed daily across the hot spot stations.

- NYMTA conducts an annual point in time count, reporting that the exact number of PEH sheltering on the subway system is unknown. However, estimates in 2022 show that nearly 1,300 PEH seek shelter on the subway system on any given night.

2. BART relies on a locally-funded end of line outreach partnership. The agency notes that there are five end of line stations.

- Only one end of line BART station has a dedicated outreach team, operating from 2:00 pm - 10:30 pm, Monday - Friday.
- This outreach program at this end of line station is funded entirely by the local jurisdiction in San Mateo County.

3. NYMTA has a strong enforcement approach to address safety issues and a coordinated offloading program that includes homeless outreach and/or mental health social services.

- The agency implemented a zero-tolerance policy for code of conduct and illegal activities to direct the transit policing strategy. This includes strict code of conduct enforcement and an increased number of mental health workers who have the ability to conduct psychiatric evaluations for people experiencing severe mental crisis in public spaces.
- The agency has an off-loading and station closure program that prioritizes deep cleaning at specified hot spot stations.
- NYMTA recently released an RFP for a program to provide transport services to local shelters.

From the peer review, all transit agencies do some form of point-in-time count to estimate the number of PEH. Local shelter/housing options and Social Service connections are key to successful end of line outreach programs. Each transit agency stresses the importance of having access to available shelter beds in the local jurisdictions where the end of line station is located. Outreach without adequate bed availability and access to resources during late night hours will not reduce the number of people sheltering near or on the transit system.

Local Partnerships and Regional Coordination

In coordination with the County's Homeless Initiative, Metro is standing up a task force with social service agencies to better coordinate resource deployment on the transit system. Metro staff continues to engage with cities experiencing high numbers of PEH exiting the Metro system at the end of service in pursuit of partnerships. Each community has unique challenges and the solution to

Metro's end of line offboarding for stations within those communities will not be one-size-fits all. Different strategies will need to be developed for end of line stations for subway and light rail systems, given their different infrastructure. Effective end of line strategies will require leadership at the local level.

Staff established a partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services, Housing for Health Program's Mobile Care Clinic, to deliver on-site medical and mental health resources at the Westlake MacArthur Park station. The mobile clinic offers a variety of services, including (but not limited to) medical & mental health, such as women-focused care, wound care, blood work, behavioral health care, psychiatry, enhanced care management, field-based medically assisted treatment, and care transition to unhoused riders and members of the public.

Metro's outreach teams and Metro Ambassadors will distribute flyers to alert riders when the clinic is on-site and will work closely with the DHS team to refer unhoused riders to this resource. As we continue this partnership, we aim to collect referral data to demonstrate the level of engagement/need with the intention of replicating this strategy at other Metro hot spots and stations.

Long Beach

Metro staff has engaged representatives from the County CEO Homeless Initiative, LAHSA, Department of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Health Services (DHS), and the City of Long Beach in an effort to identify a potential service hub program and location to serve individuals who are deboarding from the Downtown Long Beach Station.

LAHSA provided a preliminary estimate for annual operational costs of \$1 million for a hub that would serve up to 50 individuals, with a small number of short-term crisis beds and 24-hour resource navigation services. This budget does not include capital costs which would require the acquisition of temporary structures and any sewer or water infrastructure upgrades that would be needed. LAHSA and the County will determine the anticipated budget for capital and operational costs and plan for operations.

Metro prepared a feasibility analysis of the two Metro parking lots, Wardlow and Willow, in the City of Long Beach for use as a homeless services navigation hub. See Attachment E (A Line End of Line Station Parking Lot Feasibility Analysis - March 2023). The City has noted that the community has serious concerns about the location of the potential navigation hub at the Willow or Wardlow parking lots. Analysis showed that the Willow parking lot is feasible for establishing a navigation hub program if challenges are mitigated. Wardlow parking lot is not feasible for a navigation hub program due to the inherent challenges of the site.

Metro remains committed to providing Metro property at the Willow Station should the City of Long Beach decide to move forward with a navigation hub. Should the city decide to forgo the hub, Metro will look for other suitable locations at end of line station to establish a navigation hub.

Santa Monica

Metro staff met with City of Santa Monica representatives to review the end of line evaluation findings from the Downtown Santa Monica E Line (Expo) station in February 2023. The City of Santa Monica expressed willingness to support people experiencing homelessness through several strategies,

including providing access to a city family reunification program. Staff will be engaging further with the City to collaborate on other strategies and resources.

Metro Homeless Emergency Declaration

The City of Los Angeles, followed by the County of Los Angeles and the cities of Santa Monica and Long Beach, declared the magnitude of the homelessness crisis to be a State of Emergency in order to expedite the review and approval process of interim and permanent housing projects and to quickly deliver social services and housing solutions and supportive services. At the January meeting, the Metro Board requested a report back regarding any streamlining that could take place under a similar emergency declaration by the Metro Board.

Public Utilities Code section 130234 allows Metro, by a 2/3 vote of the Board, to declare to and determine that public interest and necessity demand the immediate expenditure of public money to safeguard life, health, or property, and thereupon proceed to expend or enter into a contract involving the expenditure of any sum needed in the emergency without observance of competitive bidding requirements otherwise required under the Public Utilities Code.

By declaring a state of emergency Metro's efforts to alleviate the impact of homelessness on its transit system would be streamlined and expedited by suspending competitive bidding requirements otherwise required under the Public Utilities Code, including soliciting competitive bids for supplies, materials, equipment, and the award of contracts for services. In the event that the Metro Board would want to adopt its own emergency declaration, the Board would need to make the appropriate findings. In previous reports to the Board, staff has documented the overwhelming impacts of the profound homeless crisis on the Metro system.

Strategies for Pursuing Interim Housing on Metro-owned Property

Los Angeles County is experiencing a severe housing shortage. One of the leading factors of homelessness is the lack of affordable housing. In February 2023, the Metro Board adopted Motion 28 by Directors Bass, Hahn, Najarian, Mitchell, Solis, and Krekorian that directed staff to identify potential property owned by Metro that could be used for shelter, services, or interim housing. In March 2023, staff presented an updated inventory of Metro-owned property that is vacant, surplus, or underutilized. Staff is exploring strategies to streamline the production of temporary housing via the Metro Housing Lab.

Previously, Metro has been active in supporting interim housing on Metro property in recent years. There are four existing interim housing developments on Metro properties: Bridge Home facility - Division 6 in Venice; Bridge Home Facility - Van Nuys G Line (Orange) Park and Ride; Tiny Home Village - Reseda G Line; and LAHSA Safe Parking Program - L Line (Gold) Atlantic Station.

In response to the February Board Motion, Housing Lab staff have analyzed the list of available Metro sites and determined preliminary capacity estimates for common modular construction typologies that could be pursued on such sites. Staff has also surveyed and assessed modular building techniques, and companies identified quick-build foundations and utilities to further accelerate the delivery of modular and panelized construction and explored partnerships with local

jurisdictions to support funding applications.

Key findings include:

- Several modular products are re-useable and re-locatable.
- Metro sites are sometimes characterized by environmental challenges such as soil contamination or freeway adjacency or will ultimately need to be returned to use for other purposes. Temporary foundations can be used over existing parking lots and provide a crawl space where utilities can be run above ground. By using such a foundation, the expensive process of site excavation can sometimes be avoided entirely.
- Operational funding for service providers continues to be a barrier to the implementation of interim housing.

To advance interim housing on Metro-owned property and overcome the operational funding barrier, Metro can partner with local jurisdictions coupled with agencies and nonprofits that are seeking land to include in funding applications for the construction and operation of interim housing.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

The current end of line deboarding policy is necessary to maintain efforts to improve the safety of the Metro system for our customers and employees. Receiving and filing this report will not directly impact Metro's system safety.

EQUITY PLATFORM

By collaborating with other agencies to address homelessness, Metro will be able to help serve LA County's unsheltered population, who are severely disenfranchised members of our communities. A way to reduce the number of unhoused riders seeking shelter on Metro is to increase the interim and permanent housing supply and access to social services at the end of line stations in communities with higher concentrations of homelessness. Metro data shows that key demographics of unhoused riders that we currently serve are African American (49.3%), older adults (17%), and/or youth (11%).

Metro's current homelessness response program provides access to social services and housing for Metro riders throughout the county.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The report back supports Strategic Plan Goal #3.4: Metro will play a strong leadership role in efforts to address homelessness in LA County.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will complete the counts and surveys at the remaining end of line stations. Staff will also continue collaborative discussions with local jurisdictions, LAHSA, and the City and County of Los Angeles to develop partnership opportunities, specifically focused on delivering services and resources to unhoused riders onto Metro's properties. Staff will provide regular updates to the Board on these efforts.

The Housing Lab will continue to coordinate with Metro departments to confirm the sites that may be used for interim housing and to identify any controls required to protect Metro's interest in the

property, including the ability to repurpose the property, protection of adjacent infrastructure, additional safety and security measures, etc.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - End of Line Motion October 2022 - Item 20

Attachment B - LAHSA 2022 PIT Count Results

Attachment C - End of Line Motion Amendment February 2023 - Item 19.1

Attachment D - Long Beach Service Hub Concept Motion February 2023 - Item 31

Attachment E - End of Line Station Survey Data Summary April 2023

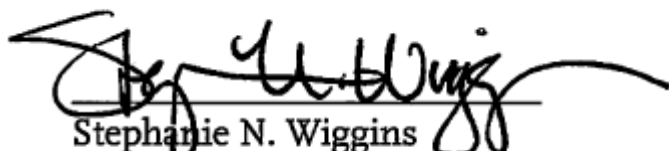
Attachment F - A Line Station Parking Lot Feasibility Analysis

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