



Metro

Board Report

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

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EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MAY 18, 2023

SUBJECT: STATE AND FEDERAL REPORT

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE May 2023 State and Federal Legislative Report.

DISCUSSION

Executive Management Committee Remarks Prepared by Raffi Haig Hamparian Government Relations Senior Director, Federal Affairs

Chair Najarian and members of the Executive Management Committee, I am pleased to provide an update on several key federal matters of interest to our agency. This report was prepared on May 3, 2023, and will be updated, as appropriate, at the Executive Management Committee meeting on March 18, 2023. The status of relevant pending legislation is monitored on the [Metro Government Relations Legislative Matrix <http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/230502-%20May%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf>](http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/230502-%20May%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf), which is updated monthly.

Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation

Our CEO and Government Relations team continue to reach out and hold briefings with members of the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation to ensure that our agency is providing timely and accurate information on Metro's projects and programs in their respective districts - and, more broadly - our efforts to enhance mobility and equity for the 10 million people who live, work, and play in Los Angeles County.

Most recently, on May 2, 2023, our CEO conveyed a letter to members of the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation expressing Metro's support for the Freedom to Move Act - which was recently reintroduced by U.S. Senator Ed Markey (D-MA) and Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley (D-MA). The Freedom to Move Act would create a federal grant system to provide for a fare-free public

transportation program. The goals of this smartly designed legislation is in alignment with the Biden/Harris Administration's Justice40 Initiative "on how certain Federal investments might be made toward a goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits flow to disadvantaged communities."

Metro's Board of Directors previously voted unanimously to support the Freedom to Move Act on August 27, 2020, and our 2023 Board-approved Federal Legislative Program encourages our agency to "continue to be a national leader in advocating for pending legislation that would establish [federal] grants in support of fare-free and reduced-fare transit programs."

Community Project Funding/Congressional Directed Spending Requests

Metro submitted a number of Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending requests to members of the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation. For members of the House of Representatives, our agency requested funding for our successful Metro GoPass Program. For our two U.S. Senators, our agency requested funding for a number of projects, like the West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor Program and the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 - along with a funding request for our Metro GoPass Program.

As of the date that this document was drafted, our U.S. Senators submitted funding requests for several Metro projects - including the West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor Project, the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project, and the Sepulveda Pass Transit Corridor Project. Given the understandable fact they face many funding requests from non-profit and other community-based entities within their respective congressional districts - no member of the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation submitted a funding request for the Metro GoPass Program.

Los Angeles County Supervisors Meeting with U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg

We were pleased that Metro's Deputy CEO Sharon Gookin was invited to participate in a meeting on April 26th by Los Angeles County Supervisor and Metro Director Hahn and Los Angeles County Supervisor and Metro Director Mitchell with U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg. The meeting included a robust discussion of the West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor - which is our agency's Board-approved #1 priority project with respect to the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grant Program. Metro's successful GoPass Program was also highlighted at this meeting with Secretary Buttigieg. Metro is deeply appreciative to Director Hahn for extending an invitation for Metro to participate in this meeting that was held at the U.S. Department of Transportation's headquarters in Washington, DC.

Federal Railroad Administration - Administrator Amit Bose

On May 3, 2023, Metro hosted Federal Railroad Administration Administrator Amit Bose. We discuss a number of matters with the FRA Administrator, including but not limited to our work related to goods movement matters across Los Angeles County, LINK-US, and other key projects of concern for our agency.

Center for Transportation Excellence

The U.S. Department of Commerce recently announced that “the Economic Development Administration (EDA) is launching a transformational new program that will continue the Biden-Harris Administration’s work to strengthen U.S. supply chains, create good-paying jobs, and expand economic opportunity across America. The Regional Technology and Innovation Hub (Tech Hubs) Program will strengthen U.S. national and economic security by developing clusters of businesses, communities, colleges and universities, and workers focused on accelerating innovation and technology deployment throughout the country.”

Metro will be closely following the EDA’s work on this front in the context of potentially securing support for our Center for Transportation Excellence initiative. This initiative is seeking to ensure that in the future bus and rolling stock purchased by our agency is manufactured - not just assembled - in Los Angeles County.

Capital Investment Grant Program-Justice40

As I have consistently shared in reports over the last several months, staff are continuing to work with the USDOT - and the FTA in particular - to ensure that future updates to the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program include the Justice40 initiative. Earlier this year, our CEO authored a letter on February 21, 2023, thanking Secretary Buttigieg and FTA Administrator Fernandez for their continued work updating CIG guidelines - with an eye on Justice40. Staff look forward to keeping the Board apprised of progress on this front in the coming weeks and months.

Federal Transportation Grants

Consistent with the clear direction of our CEO, our government relations team is working to advocate for all grant applications submitted by our agency to the U.S. Department of Transportation and other relevant Executive Branch agencies.

This advocacy includes soliciting support from Board members and securing the strong backing of members of the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation.

Metro is currently advocating in support of a \$25 million RAISE grant submitted to the U.S. Department of Transportation for our transit services on Western Avenue - which is one of our agency’s busiest bus routes.

Metro is also currently advocating for a \$85 million Bus & Bus Facilities/Low or No Emissions grant to secure zero emission buses and zero emission infrastructure for Metro’s Bus Division 8 - located in Chatsworth. Notably, this grant application also includes a robust workforce development component.

Conclusion:

Chair Najarian - I look forward to expanding on this report at the Executive Management Committee meeting slated for May 18, 2023, with any new developments that may occur over the next several weeks.

**Executive Management Committee
State Remarks Prepared by Michael Turner
Executive Officer, Government Relations**

Chair Najarian and members of the Executive Management Committee, I am pleased to provide an update on a number of state matters of interest to our agency. This report was prepared on May 3rd, 2023, and will be updated, as appropriate, at the Executive Management Committee meeting on May 18th, 2023. The status of relevant pending legislation is monitored on the [Metro Government Relations Legislative Matrix <http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/230502-%20May%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf>](http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/230502-%20May%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf), which is updated monthly.

State Budget Update

On April 26th, Metro Board Chair Najarian was joined by 1st Vice-Chair Dupont-Walker, Directors Solis, Sandoval, and Dutra, along with CEO Wiggins, on a budget advocacy trip to Sacramento. This trip was centered around meetings with key legislators in leadership and the budget process, in order to advance the Board's request that the legislature reject the Governor's proposed \$2 billion in cuts to the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP). This budget cycle is crucial to Metro's plan to advance the Gold Line Foothill Extension and West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor, which would benefit from the increased TIRCP funding. Board members and staff were warmly welcomed and received great feedback from the offices. We look forward to continuing this dialogue and collaboration with the State Legislature as we move into the next phase of the budget process.

On that same day, Senate Democrats released their 2023-24 budget plan, dubbed "Protect Our Progress," which outlines a number of key investments and builds upon the Governor's January budget proposal. The Senate budget plan arrives in advance of the May Revision to the Governor's proposal and includes actions and potential solutions to address the anticipated growing budget deficit.

Crucially, the Protect Our Progress plan rejects the Governor's proposed cuts to the Transportation Infrastructure Package, including the \$2 billion in cuts to TIRCP. Other transportation-related proposals in the plan include a rejection of proposed delays in the Ports and Goods Movement Package. The plan sets an expectation to work with stakeholders, the Assembly, and the Administration in establishing local flexibility opportunities with various transportation funding streams to assist transit agencies with operations expenses, along with reform and accountability measures as a short-term solution to the fiscal cliff that transit agencies around the state are facing.

Finally, the Legislature has wrapped its first set of budget subcommittee hearings, following the January release of the Governor's budget proposal. The next stage of the budget process will commence in the next couple of weeks, with the release of the Governor's May Revision to his January budget. Metro staff continue to work through the California Transit Association with other transit operators around the state on advocating for more permanent funding solutions, as agencies begin facing a fiscal cliff in both the short and long term.

Update on TIRCP Cycle 6 Funding

On April 24th, the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) announced the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) Cycle 6 grants for new transit projects. I am pleased to announce that Metro will be the recipient of \$95 million in TIRCP funds for the CORE Capacity and System Integration Project on the C (Green) and K (Crenshaw/LAX) Lines, as well as \$35 million for the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project, which will extend the L Line (Gold) from East Los Angeles. In total, \$690 million was awarded to new projects from around the State, of which more than \$200 million will come to LA County, and \$130 million will be awarded to Metro.

The award for the CORE Capacity and System Integration Project will allow the completion of capital, operational, rehabilitation, and expansion (i.e., CORE) improvements on the Metro K and C light rail lines necessary to accommodate and allow the operation of three-car trains. This increased capacity will be especially crucial as Los Angeles prepares to host the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The award for the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 is from the Major Projects - Project Development Reserve funding category. It will support completing the partial design for the locally preferred alternative of the Metro L Line Eastside Transit Corridor Extension. Advancing the project development will position Metro to compete for Federal Transit Administration Capital Investment Grant (CIG) funding.

Legislative Update

On April 12th, Metro-sponsored AB 1377 by Assemblymember Laura Friedman (D - Burbank) passed the Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee on a vote of 8-0. AB 1377 would require that applicants for funding through the state Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention program include in their yearly reports data and a narrative summary of steps that the applicant has taken to improve the delivery of housing and services to people experiencing homelessness, or at risk of homelessness, on transit properties that operate in their jurisdiction. AB 1377 would require additional accountability measures to ensure that the agencies already tasked with addressing homelessness are coordinating with transit agencies to reach our mutual goals of housing individuals and providing high-quality transit service. AB 1377 supports the Board-approved legislative program through state goal #4 related to initiatives that support transit riders and enhance the customer experience, specifically under the activity to: "Support legislation, initiatives, and programs for additional funding, services, and resources to address the homelessness crisis, including any opportunities for direct assistance to Metro and our partner agencies."

Other Metro-sponsored and supported bills also continue to move through the legislative process. AB 499 by Assemblymember Luz Rivas (D - San Fernando Valley), Metro's sponsored legislation to allow the agency to utilize job order contracting, is awaiting a hearing in the full Assembly after passing the Local Government Committee. AB 761, Assemblymember Friedman's Transit Transformation Task Force Bill formally supported by Metro, is awaiting a hearing in the Assembly Appropriations Committee. AB 610 by Assemblymember Holden (D - Pasadena), which would create a Youth Transit Pass Pilot Program, and which Metro has a support if amended position on, is also in the Assembly Appropriations Committee. Metro-supported SB 434 by Senator Min (D - Irvine), which would require California's 10 largest transit operators to gather qualitative and quantitative ridership data regarding street harassment as riders wait at transit stops and ride transit vehicles, is similarly awaiting a final hearing in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

State Equity Analysis

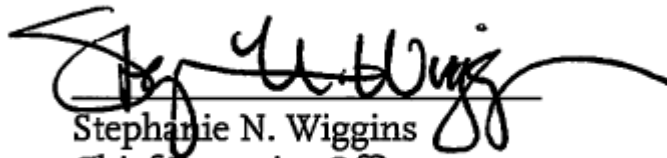
Government Relations will continue to work with the Office of Civil Rights, Racial Equity, and Inclusion in reviewing legislation introduced in Sacramento to address any issues of equity in proposed bills and the budget process.

Conclusion

Staff will expand on this report at the Executive Management Committee meeting with any new developments over the next several weeks.

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