



## Board Report

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Agenda Number: 15

### EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MARCH 16, 2017

**SUBJECT: ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS THE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS OF OLDER ADULTS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

**ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

RECEIVE AND FILE the **action plan to address the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities**. The action plan contains extensive background information on efforts currently underway at Metro in two distinct areas:

- A. Planning and project programming efforts to identify and recommend actions addressing mobility needs of passengers with disabilities and senior individuals in Los Angeles County, including initiatives mandated under state and federal law; and
- B. Specific enhancements of both public transit infrastructure and service operations to accommodate passenger with disabilities and senior individuals on Metro's fixed-route transit system and complementary paratransit service.

#### **ISSUE**

At the June 2016 meeting, the Board approved Motion #47 (Attachment A) directing the Chief Executive Officer to: 1) develop an Action Plan to better address the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities, 2) prepare an annual accessibility report and, 3) work with Access Services to convene an annual countywide forum to address improvements in service coordination and integration.

The motion requested the Action Plan to include five specific elements including:

- A. An overview of agency-wide efforts to serve older adults and persons with disabilities with a focus on activities that go beyond the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements;
- B. Recommended metrics to measure challenges and successes;
- C. A roadmap and timeline to enhance community partnerships and participation of non-profits and other stakeholders;
- D. An evaluation of the feasibility of enhancing the paratransit service provided by Access Services beyond the ADA minimum; and,

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E. An analysis of Electric Personal Assistive Mobility Devices.

This report represents the Action Plan and includes how staff will address the numerous elements outlined in the motion. Note that in several cases, as indicated, the Action Plan lays out the future steps to be undertaken in order to adequately address the elements - not all could be initiated, conducted and concluded at the time of this response.

## **DISCUSSION**

The first step in developing the Action Plan requires identification of existing plans, current implementation efforts, and available resources to support enhancing transportation services for older adults and persons with disabilities. Based on TAP data, about 16.5 percent of Metro's total annual ridership consists of older adults and persons with disabilities. Responsibility for working with these riders is shared among several departments.

The Office of Civil Rights is responsible for ensuring that Metro complies with the requirements of the ADA and California's Title 24 and developing programs that go above and beyond the statutory minimums. Countywide Planning and Development Department prepares the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan, oversees the allocation of Federal Section 5310 Formula Grants for Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310 program funds for Los Angeles County, and develops new programs related to active transportation and first and last mile services. Operations is involved in many aspects of ensuring the system is fully accessible for older adults and persons with disabilities. The Community Relations Department develops community partnerships and also manages travel training for older adults through the On the Move program. Access Services is a separate, independent agency that is funded from regional sales tax dollars collected by Metro and through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

## **I. ACTION PLAN**

### **A. Overview of Agency Efforts**

#### **1. Overarching Policy Documents & Initiatives**

##### **The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)**

The LRTP, updated last in 2009, provides a vision and the guiding policy behind funding decisions for future transportation projects and programs in Los Angeles County. Among other requirements, these major projects and programs must be developed and operated to meet ADA mandates. In addition, funding for complementary paratransit service is a priority in the adopted LRTP. During the next update, staff will conduct a needs assessment for transportation services by older adults and people with disabilities so a strategic view may be developed as part of the LRTP update. However, the LRTP must be financially constrained so these needs must be evaluated and balanced against other needs within constrained resources. Therefore, the LRTP update will include a cost assessment to ensure investments are made that provide the most benefit. Overall, the strategic view and the LRTP update will need to reflect the significant new baseline created by the passage of Measure M.

### The 2016-2019 Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Plan

In July 2015, the Board adopted the locally-developed 2016-2019 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Los Angeles County (Coordinated Plan). This is a long standing federal requirement, wherein the Coordinated Plan “identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, seniors, and people with low incomes (Target Populations); provides strategies for meeting those local needs; and prioritizes transportation services and projects for funding and implementation.” It also documents the considerable investment in transportation which has been made within Los Angeles County and its benefits to address some of the mobility needs of the Target Populations.

The Coordinated Plan was developed through a process that included participation by older adults, persons with disabilities, veterans, persons of low income, representatives of public, private and non-profit transportation and human services providers and other members of the public. The Coordinated Plan also considered existing research, studies, and reports relevant to the Target Populations from Metro, SCAG, Access Services, local governments and nonprofit organizations.

Through these efforts, the Coordinated Plan documents the results of a transportation needs assessment for the Target Populations. Key findings include: heavy reliance on both local and regional transit services ranging from fixed-route to specialized services; north county communities have additional transit needs not being met by existing services; specific mobility challenges exist in using the established transportation network effectively; changes in demographics (aging and languages) are increasing the challenges of providing needed transportation; and difficulty in accessing medical trips.

The Coordinated Plan also provides and prioritizes 38 strategies grouped by five goals to address gaps in services for the Target Populations. The five goals include: 1) fund mobility options, 2) address mobility gaps, 3) provide support services, 4) promote and improve information portals, and 5) enhance accountable performance monitoring systems. Attachment B contains a listing of the 38 subregional and regional strategies to achieve these goals. Importantly, these strategies serve as the list of project types eligible for Section 5310 program funds. However, the needs are much greater than the Section 5310 funding available.

### Section 5310 Program

Metro is the Designated Recipient of FTA Section 5310 funds in urbanized areas of Los Angeles County, totaling about \$7 million per year, and is responsible for the planning, programming, distribution and management of these funds. To fulfill our Designated Recipient obligations, a competitive solicitation for projects was conducted in 2015 and the Board approved allocation of available funds to 22 eligible projects for Los Angeles County. The next solicitation for Section 5310 projects is planned for 2017 and the proposed process will be presented to the Board for approval in January 2017. As noted above, projects selected for funding must be included in the adopted Coordinated Plan. Outreach to various stakeholders to receive input on the eligibility requirements, evaluation criteria and funding allocations for the 2017 solicitation has been completed.

Periodically, other federal, state or non-profit discretionary funding opportunities such as the recent FTA Rides to Wellness Demonstration and Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility emerge, and staff will determine how these efforts align and support the future Annual Accessibility Report.

### The Office of Civil Rights

Metro's Office of Civil Rights was created in 2011 to oversee and manage the services for users protected under various Civil Rights legislation at the federal and state level and Metro's own civil rights policies. The Civil Rights Office also ensures that Metro is fully compliant with requirements of the ADA and other state and federal requirements for ensuring our system is fully accessible to persons with disabilities. Prior to 2011, Metro had a single staff person assigned to deal with all aspects of customer ADA issues. Today the Office of Civil Rights has a staff of 7 individuals dedicated to improving accessibility for persons with disabilities and ensuring that Metro meets all federal and state accessibility requirements.

### The Consolidated Transportation Services Agency

In 1994, in response to the passage of Assembly Bill 120, the Social Services Transportation Act, Metro designated Access Services as the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) for Los Angeles County. The role of a CTSA is to facilitate coordination of transportation services to reduce gaps in transportation for low mobility groups including older adults and persons with disabilities. The role of a CTSA is also to achieve cost savings, lower insurance premiums and more efficient use of vehicles and funding resources to serve these disadvantaged groups. The CTSA and its unique supporting legislation allow it to deal with the problems of efficient or duplicative transportations systems and can/should be the leaders in developing new services for the populations with mobility challenges in Los Angeles.

### Metro Strategic Plan

The Office of Extraordinary Innovation (OEI) has initiated the development of a Metro Strategic Plan to establish a clear vision for the agency, develop a roadmap to guide Metro in achieving our goals, measure our progress, and ensure that our agency can adapt to the changing needs of our customers and LA County residents, and the way they travel. This includes working with the Board, staff, and the larger community to define mobility goals for the county and enhancing our business strategies to tie programs together across Metro and align them towards a focused purpose. As part of this work, we will be exploring how Metro can better serve all LA County residents, which includes older adults and persons with disabilities, to create and maintain a seamless, world-class transportation system.

## 2. Technical and Outreach Enhancements to Operational System

There have been a number of new and innovative technical enhancements that have been implemented to address the accessibility on the Metro system. The initiatives include: the G-Tel system that assists disabled riders to gain access to the rail system where turnstiles are latched; specialized interior designs for new bus and rail vehicles to make them more convenient and safer for persons with disabilities and older adults; tactile pathways and directional bars to lead visually-impaired riders through the system; Wayfindr Bluetooth beacon system to help the visually impaired navigate complex terminals; enhanced bus operator training and accessibility fairs at bus divisions to reinforce training; Mystery Rider program that provides ADA checks on bus operators; enhancements to transit terminal information systems to improve provision of information to visually-impaired and other disabled riders; and new rail station lighting criteria. In addition to these enhancements, Metro offers discounted fares to older adults and persons with disabilities. Attachment C contains additional information on these current operational systems.

Additionally, Metro is implementing a number of outreach efforts to improve access to information about reduced fare, services provided and specialized features on the rail and bus system for older adults and persons with disabilities. The programs include a mobile customer service center that visits senior facilities; On the Move Riders Club that provides senior peer-to-peer training; and various travel training activities through the Abilities Expo, Rancho Los Amigos Hospital and the Braille Institute. Attachment C presents further descriptions of these outreach efforts.

In addition to the many technical enhancements and specialized outreach in support of better accessibility to the Metro transit system that have been implemented to date, Metro is pursuing several additional initiatives. These initiatives include: hands-free elevators, stronger signage for reserved (priority) seating, mandatory wheelchair securement, further bus enhancements, grade crossing protection, Countywide Forum on Coordination and Integration of Transportation for Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities, and Mobile Wheelchair Strapping and Marking program to assist passengers with wheelchairs be correctly secured as they ride on Metro buses. Attachment C presents further descriptions of these programs that are being considered. A cost assessment will be conducted as staff determines whether these enhancements should be pursued.

It is the goal of Metro to become the most accessible transit system in the world and these innovative programs go above and beyond the minimum requirements provided in federal and state regulations.

## **B. Recommended Metrics**

The motion passed at the June meeting includes a requirement to develop metrics to measure challenges and successes for providing countywide services for older adults and persons with disabilities. Metro will begin reporting on the proposed metrics in the Annual Accessibility Report that will be prepared as an augmentation of the Coordinated Plan as discussed above. The metrics currently being considered to be included in the Accessibility Report include:

1. Ridership growth rate of older adults on Metro compared to growth rate of countywide older adult population

The purpose of this metric is to determine if ridership on Metro by older adults is growing faster, slower or at the same speed as the population growth of older adults in the county. Data will be obtained from periodic surveys of ridership onboard Metro buses and rail lines and compared to publicly available estimates of the annual growth rate of the population of older adults in Los Angeles County.

2. Free trips (Taps) taken by Access Services members on Metro

This metric measures the use of certified Access members riding Metro. Access members are permitted to ride Metro free of charge in order to encourage the use of Metro rather than the much more expensive paratransit service provided by Access. The opportunity to ride Metro, and most other fixed-route services in Los Angeles at no cost, has encouraged many Access riders to use fixed route rather than Access paratransit.

3. Number of trips taken by Access Services registrants on Access and number of trips taken by wheelchair registrants on Access Services

The opportunity to ride Metro, and most other fixed-route services in Los Angeles at no cost, has encouraged many Access riders to take as many trips on fixed-route services. These two numbers will show how many trips are being taken on Access and provide an indication of how successful Metro is providing services that are convenient and attractive to users of wheelchairs.

4. Number of Access Services registrants in LA County

It is believed that in recent years the number of Access Services riders has increased due to an increase in the older adult population that are also disabled and, as a result, eligible for ADA paratransit service. As more baby boomers reach retirement age and as older adults suffer further declines in their health, more of them may choose or need to use ADA paratransit services for their transportation needs. This data will allow Metro to compare the growth rate in registrants with the actual number of rides on both Access and Metro and to assess this trend.

5. Trips (Taps) by Los Angeles County Transit Operators Association (LACTOA) Card Holders on Metro

Older adults and persons with disabilities are eligible to obtain a LACTOA TAP Card which entitles the pass holder to receive discounted fares. Knowing the number of Taps from these users will enable Metro to report on use by older adults and persons with disabilities. The data can be separated to provide totals for each category of rider.

6. Number of active LACTOA cards in circulation

This metric, when used in combination with the number of LACTOA Taps, will allow Metro to understand how often older adults or persons with disabilities are using Metro and to measure the success of service enhancements in attracting new rides by older adults or persons with disabilities.

7. Number of annual trips provided and/or program participation as a result of Section 5310 program grant awards

The Section 5310 program provides funds to Metro for the purpose of awarding grants to assist private nonprofit groups and/or governmental agencies in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meet their needs. As part of the awards process, the number of trips that will be taken or program participants served as a result of the grant funding will be monitored. This metric will measure how the grant money is being used to provide transportation options in Los Angeles County.

8. Mystery Rider Accessibility Index

The Office of Civil Rights has developed an Accessibility Index based on the results of the

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Mystery Ride program on Metro buses. The Index will come into effect in 2017 following updates to the Mystery Ride questionnaire and it will become a key performance indicator for accessibility. Including this metric will provide a picture of how well Metro equipment and staff are meeting the accessibility standards required by the ADA and Metro policies.

9. Number of Outreach Events and Contacts

This metric will provide an estimate of the number of outreach events attended and the contacts made with older adults and persons with disabilities. The total numbers will include estimates since definite data will not always be available; however it should provide an indication of the strength of our outreach activities.

10. Qualitative Research on Rider Experience

This metric will help Metro better understand the experience of older adults and people with disabilities using the Metro system, including the identification of impediments to the full utilization of available transportation resources by these groups. This will include analysis of available focus group data.

11. Community Feedback by Older Adults and People with Disabilities

This metric will analyze feedback submitted in writing or by telephone regarding concerns by older adults and people with disabilities regarding the provision of Metro Service. Comments will be categorized by subject and frequency.

12. Incidents of Facility Failure Impacting Accessibility at Transit Stations

This metric will monitor the number incidents where transit station facilities, such as elevators and escalators, fail to operate properly and impact accessibility for older adults and people with disabilities. The location and time of the facility failure will be included in the analysis.

The above noted metrics may be modified and other metrics may be added once staff begins developing the Annual Accessibility Report.

### **C. Roadmap and Timeline to Increase Community Partnerships**

As highlighted in the Overview of Agency Efforts, the Coordinated Plan requires extensive outreach and engagement with multiple stakeholders in the disabled and elderly communities, and those who serve them. As we develop the Annual Accessibility Report, staff will assess how this outreach needs to be enriched, and a timeline for doing so. Staff is considering establishing an advisory group to provide input on Action Plan efforts, and assist Metro to expand its reach in providing information to older adults and people with disabilities through advisory member communication networks.

### **D. Evaluation of Enhancing Access Services Paratransit**

Access Services will be undertaking a Comprehensive Operational Review (COR) of its service

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delivery model. As part of the review, Access will investigate centralizing its reservations, scheduling and/or dispatch systems to see if it would make the service more efficient. During this review, Access will task the consulting firm with evaluating the feasibility and the costs associated with changing from a next day service to same day service model, and expanding Access' service area beyond the minimum required  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile from a fixed-route corridor to 1.5 miles. Access has awarded a contract for comprehensive operational review. Additionally, Access has issued an RFP and is reviewing new methods for conducting its eligibility review process.

## **E. Evaluation of EPAMDs**

Staff will develop a scope of work in order to study a range of issues related to Electronic Personal Assistive Mobility Devices (EPAMDs) e.g. Segways and other self-balancing 2 wheel devices. These issues will include those specifically directed within the motion including Metro policy review, assessing newer technologies, expanding current Metro shared-mobility programs, infrastructure needs, and potential legislative or policy changes.

The work effort will result in a report focused on opportunities to expand mobility options and complement existing transportation services. We anticipate completion of a report in approximately 9 months, with results to be highlighted within the upcoming annual report also directed by this motion. The study will focus on scenarios and case studies that will evaluate the use of devices for specific types of trips. Recommendations will focus on the trips/devices that are the most promising for meeting the objectives of the motion, but will also consider broader mobility benefits for all users, including first/last mile accessibility to transit.

Work to develop the report will include the creation of a project working group which will advise staff and consultants. The group would consist of Metro departments with applicable expertise including Civil Rights, Bus Operations, Information Technology Services (ITS) and OEI. Additionally, the group will include representatives of older adults and disability communities. It should be noted that ITS recently completed a review of some EPAMDs as part of a Coro Fellowship project. While not focused on older adults or persons with disabilities, the Coro report will provide baseline data useful for this effort.

Anticipated resources to complete a work as described here are reviewed in the Fiscal Impact section of this report. Among the options to be considered will be augmenting an existing study developing a Slow Speed Lane Network Strategic Plan that is currently being developed in conjunction with the South Bay Cities Council of Governments.

## **II. ANNUAL ACCESSIBILITY REPORT**

The Motion approved by the Board also directed staff to prepare an annual accessibility report, which will include at least five elements. These elements include: A) all planned and implemented Coordinated Plan programs and projects funded with federal Section 5310 funds and other fund sources; B) an assessment of first mile/last mile accessibility, connectivity, and opportunities to, from and at transit stations and bus stops; C) an analysis of local return funds utilized and allocated towards services for older adults and people with disabilities; D) steps to improve outreach and education so older adults and people with disabilities are more informed about available services; E)



identification of other metrics to evaluate how Metro and partnering agencies are serving older adults and people with disabilities; F) efforts to expand Metro staff training to increase responsiveness to the needs of the older adults and people with disabilities; and G) summary of results from the Annual Forum and any resulting actions.

Given these elements, the Annual Accessibility Report almost exactly maps with the purpose of the Coordinated Plan that Metro must currently prepare under federal law. For example, the Coordinated Plan states that “addressing the remaining mobility gaps and needs of the Target Populations will require maintaining the breadth of existing transportation options that are already in place and expanding these to accommodate demographic and other changes.” It notes that the region will also need to support nontraditional modes that provide transportation alternatives to the Target Populations and encourage innovation and pilot efforts to meet some hard-to-serve trip needs. Given this significant work to date, and the clear overlap it has with desired elements of the Annual Accessibility Report requested in the motion, and the need to avoid duplication as Metro coordinates and enhances efforts to address the needs of seniors and persons with disabilities, staff will determine how to augment the Coordinated Plan and its attendant community outreach requirements to address many of the motion’s directives.

### **III. ANNUAL COUNTYWIDE FORUM**

Finally, the Board directed staff to convene a countywide forum working jointly with Access Services to address improvements in coordination & integration of services for older adults and people with disabilities. The forum will include: gerontology & mental health specialists; local governmental/non-governmental transportation & social services providers; municipal operators, local jurisdictions and consumers of services. The forum will be held no later than 90 days from the date the Annual Accessibility Report is released.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There will potentially be numerous and significant administrative, operational and capital impacts associated with recommendations in the Action Plan, and the future Annual Accessibility Report identified under this motion. As individual elements are brought forward for implementation, associated costs and the revenues available to meet those will be fully vetted, including resources that will need to be included in the FY18 and future Budgets.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Staff will begin developing the Annual Accessibility Report which will be prepared as an augmentation to the Coordinated Plan. The report is estimated to be released this summer after the 2017 Solicitation of Projects for Section 5310 funding is completed. Staff will present the report to the Board for approval at that time. Metro, in partnership with Access Services, will then convene an annual countywide forum to address improvements in coordination and integration of services to older adults and persons with disabilities. The forum will occur no later than 90 days after the release of the Annual Accessibility Report, estimated to be in late fall

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - Motion #47 on Countywide Services for Older Adults and People with Disabilities

Attachment B - The 2016-2019 Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Plan for LA County  
Prioritized Strategies by Goal

Attachment C - Existing System and Potential Future Enhancements

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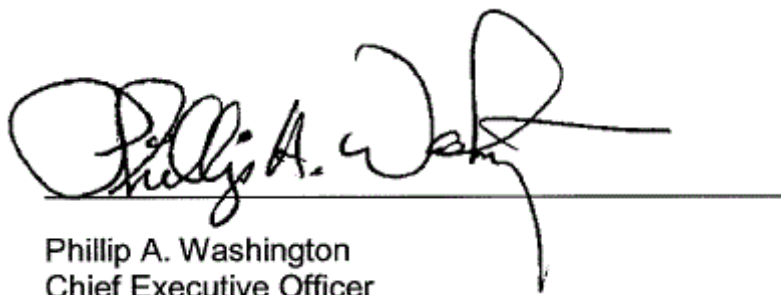
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## Metro



## Board Report

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**File #:**2016-0501, **File Type:**Motion / Motion  
Response

Agenda Number:47

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**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
JUNE 16, 2016**

**Motion by:**

**Directors Kuehl, Knabe, Solis and Antonovich**

June 16, 2016

**Countywide Services for Older Adults and People with Disabilities**

Metro has taken a leading role in expanding accessibility in our public transit system and has often undertaken initiatives that go beyond simply meeting the standards required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Metro Board adopted the 2016-2019 Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Los Angeles County (The Coordinated Plan) in order to identify and address the needs of these populations.

The Coordinated Plan includes five critical goals: 1) sustain, fund and continue to expand the rich array of public, human services and private transportation service available in Los Angeles County, 2) improve coordination between public transportation and human services to address identified mobility gaps, 3) provide necessary support services to enable access to public and human service transportation services by older adults and persons with disabilities, 4) promote, improve and expand multi-cultural information portals and mobility management tools to increase mobility options, and 5) enhance customer feedback and accountable performance monitoring systems to ensure a high quality of service.

In 2010, one out of every nine Angelenos was more than 65 years old. By 2030, this ratio is anticipated to grow to be one in five. This demographic change will be accompanied by rapid growth in the number of people with disabilities who now total more than one million individuals within LA County.

In order to serve this rapidly expanding population and to implement the Coordinated Plan, Metro must identify opportunities to enhance the mobility of older adults and people with disabilities with respect to the development and operations of both the current and future system. Metro's investments in future construction projects must not only reflect the best accessibility practices to meet federal, state, and local standards but must also encompass reliable and coordinated services through: 1) accessible services and other connecting systems that span both local and countywide areas, 2) enhancement of accessibility to, from and on fixed route transit, 3) improvement of safety and security measures and, 4) provision of necessary community education about transportation

options.

The Office of Civil Rights currently oversees Metro's efforts to better serve people with disabilities and the Customer Relations Department provides outreach and travel training to older adults. While much progress has been made, the Office of Civil Rights should have an expanded mandate, and potentially more resources, to address the growing demands of our aging and disabled populations. This office should expand its scope in a number of ways including issuing an annual report that will enable the Board to evaluate the integration of accessibility and related efforts into Metro's operations and capital program. While the office has the primary responsibility for reporting the related issues and providing accountability, these efforts must be undertaken agency-wide in order to maximize the opportunities to meet the needs of older adults and the disabled.

**MOTION by Kuehl, Knabe, Solis and Antonovich** that the Board direct the Chief Executive Officer to work with Access Services to convene an annual county-wide forum to address improvements in coordination and integration of services to older adults and the disabled. The forum shall include consultant specialists in gerontology and mental health as well as local governmental and non-governmental providers of transportation and social services to older adults and the disabled. Metro shall encourage municipal operators and local jurisdictions to participate in the annual forum. Each forum should occur no later than 90 days after the release of the annual report.

FURTHER MOVE that the Board direct the Chief Executive Officer to report back to the Metro Board in October 2016 with an action plan to better address the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities. The plan shall include the following elements:

- A. An overview of the agency-wide efforts to serve older adults and people with disabilities with a specific focus on those activities that go beyond meeting ADA requirements and with an objective to ensure coordination in planning and implementing necessary initiatives.
- B. Recommended metrics to measure challenges and successes.
- C. A roadmap and timeline to enhance community partnerships and the participation of non-profits and other stakeholders to ensure full public participation.
- D. An evaluation of the feasibility of enhancing Access Services to expand the area of services beyond the ADA minimum, including but not limited to, changing next day service to same day service, changing the requirement that clients must live within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile from a public transit line to  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile.
- E. An analysis of Electric Personal Assistive Mobility Devices (EPAMD) and other power-driven devices as defined by the California Vehicle Code and the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Disability Rights Section. Analysis shall include, but not be limited to:
  - 1. Existing Metro policies and/or the need to create a specific policy;
  - 2. Advancements in technology and ability to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

3. Opportunity for expanding our countywide, ride-share program beyond bike-share and car-share to include EPAMD's and similar devices.
4. Assessment of the infrastructure necessary to accommodate EPAMD's such as Class-I and Class-IV bike paths, enhanced sidewalks, etc.
5. Legislative and policy challenges and prospects for promoting a mode-shift toward these and similar devices especially in conjunction with transit at the federal, state and local levels.

ADDITIONALLY MOVE that the Board direct the Chief Executive Officer to prepare an annual accessibility report, which will include, at a minimum, the following elements:

- A. All planned and implemented programs and projects, including timelines, in the Coordinated Plan including those utilizing 5310 federal funds as well as additional initiatives that are supported through other federal, state and local resources.
- B. Assessment of first mile/last mile accessibility, connectivity, and opportunities to, from and at transit stations and bus stops. This assessment should include, as well, an analysis of relevant policies and programs, such as those outlined in the Active Transportation Strategic Plan, and the ways that they are enhancing accessibility for older adults and people with disabilities.
- C. Analysis of the utilization of local return funds in order to determine the allocation towards accessibility and services that are specifically targeted for older adults and people with disabilities.
- D. Steps taken to improve outreach and education of older adults and people with disabilities so that they are more informed about available services and how to best utilize them.
- E. Identification of other metrics to evaluate how Metro and partnering agencies (governmental and non-governmental) are serving older adults and people with disabilities.
- F. Efforts made to expand the training of Metro staff to increase responsiveness to the needs of older adults and people with disabilities.
- G. Summary of the results of the annual forum and any resulting actions.

**The 2016-2019 Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Plan for LA County  
Prioritized Strategies by Goal**

GOAL	STRATEGY	PRIORITY
<b>GOAL 1 FUND MOBILITY OPTIONS: Sustain, fund and continue to expand the rich array of public, human services and private transportation service available in Los Angeles County.</b>		
<b>REGIONAL STRATEGIES</b>		
1.1	<u>Strategy:</u> Fund regional services of Metro, Foothill Transit and municipal operators, as well as Access Services, vanpool, and other travel assistance services, while addressing recommendations included in SCAG’s Regional Transportation Plan/ Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) and Metro’s Short Range Transportation Plan (SRTP) and Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) to support regional trip making and address capacity and service level issues.	1
1.2	<u>Strategy:</u> Fund projects and activities that address high priorities identified in the 2016-2019 Coordinated Plan to enhance the mobility of seniors, persons with disabilities, persons of low income and veterans, including through dedicated funding from potential voter approved countywide sales tax measures.	1
1.3	<u>Strategy:</u> Develop profiles of best practices for improving mobility options for the Target Populations of the 2016-2019 Coordinated Plan to increase adoption by interested agencies and programs.	2
1.4	<u>Strategy:</u> Broaden cost-effective mobility choices that support achieving goals included in applicable regional plans, including SCAG’s RTP/SCS and Metro’s SRTP and LRTP.	1
<b>SUBREGIONAL STRATEGIES</b>		
1.5	<u>Strategy:</u> Improve bus service within/between the Santa Clarita Valley and the Antelope Valley and to provide better connections to the San Fernando Valley and the rest of Los Angeles County.	1
1.6	<u>Strategy:</u> Develop first and last mile access improvements to Metro’s expanding light rail network, including bicycle and transit connections to Metro rail stations.	2
1.7	<u>Strategy:</u> Fund city-based and other local short range transit plans and service-level improvements to address capacity and service level issues.	1
1.8	<u>Strategy:</u> Upgrade human service agency vehicle fleets to become accessible by persons with disabilities and encourage private sector taxi companies and Transportation Network Companies, such as Uber and Lyft, to operate accessible vehicles.	2
1.9	<u>Strategy:</u> Institute vehicle replacement for human service agencies to serve the Target Populations.	2
1.10	<u>Strategy:</u> Institute vehicle replacement for public transportation agencies to serve the Target Populations.	2
1.11	<u>Strategy:</u> Institute vehicle expansion for human service agencies to serve the Target Populations.	1
1.12	<u>Strategy:</u> Institute vehicle expansion for public transportation agencies to serve the Target Populations.	2

GOAL	STRATEGY	PRIORITY
<b>Goal 2 Address Mobility Needs: Improve coordination between public transportation and human service organizations to address identified mobility gaps.</b>		
<b>REGIONAL STRATEGIES</b>		
2.1	<u>Strategy:</u> Improve county-to-county paratransit trips through best practice solutions and formalized inter-agency agreements.	3
2.2	<u>Strategy:</u> Expand incentive programs to encourage subregional coordination of specialized transportation services and promote mobility management strategies to connect riders with local and subregional transportation options.	1
<b>SUBREGIONAL STRATEGIES</b>		
2.3	<u>Strategy:</u> Provide same-day transportation for critical transportation needs of the Target Populations, such as for medical care, job interviews, training and education.	1
2.4	<u>Strategy:</u> Address connectivity, including transfer and fare issues, to improve the customer experience with trips involving multiple operators.	2
2.5	<u>Strategy:</u> Improve first and last mile bus access connections within local communities, including sidewalks, and enhance safety of transit users who are also pedestrians or bicyclists.	1
2.6	<u>Strategy:</u> Provide enhanced incentives and support collaborative partnerships to better address the need for medical trips and other hard-to meet trip purposes.	1
2.7	<u>Strategy:</u> Increase span of service on weekdays and weekends on public transportation services, recognizing riders' needs for evening community college classes, retail work shifts and others.	2
2.8	<u>Strategy:</u> Fill mobility gaps for low-income job seekers to assist transition to stable employment.	2
<b>Goal 3 Provide Support Services: Provide necessary support services to enable access to public and human service transportation services by seniors, persons with disabilities, persons of low-income and the veteran population.</b>		
3.1	<u>Strategy:</u> Increase resources for travel training programs, and related rider campaigns, to encourage use of fixed route transportation by seniors and persons with disabilities when feasible.	1
3.2	<u>Strategy:</u> Develop, fund and support additional volunteer driver/mileage reimbursement programs for difficult-to-serve trips for seniors and persons with disabilities, replicating mileage reimbursement models already successful with these populations.	1
3.3	<u>Strategy:</u> Broaden availability of best practice solutions for door-to-door and door-through-door transportation for persons who are frail or isolated and/or need additional assistance at the trip origin or destination.	2
3.4	<u>Strategy:</u> Develop bus stop, path-of-access and other pedestrian or bicycle improvement projects.	2
3.5	<u>Strategy:</u> Incorporate lower-cost ridesharing options including Transportation Network Companies (such as Uber and Lyft) into subsidy and voucher based programs that benefit users and support other activities that promote cost-efficient, cost-effective, coordinated transportation.	2
3.6	<u>Strategy:</u> Support and broaden means-based fare discounts to very low income populations to enhance their accessibility and use of public transportation services.	2
<b>Goal 4 Promote and Improve Information Portals: Promote, improve and expand multi-cultural information portals and mobility management tools to increase mobility options.</b>		

GOAL	STRATEGY	PRIORITY
<b>REGIONAL STRATEGIES</b>		
4.1	<u>Strategy:</u> Enhance trip planning to incorporate transportation services offered by public transit agencies, human service agencies, and private sources to provide current and specific origin and destination trip plans, providing current and updated information to the Target Populations and other users. This includes establishing an easily accessible multi-modal “find-a-ride” function and maintaining it with up-to-date information.	1
4.2	<u>Strategy:</u> Increase the effectiveness in use of social media to promote mobility options to the Target Populations.	3
<b>SUBREGIONAL STRATEGIES</b>		
4.3	<u>Strategy:</u> Support local and regional public transportation services by providing real-time transit information.	2
4.4	<u>Strategy:</u> Provide route/schedule information, including bus stop identification information at the bus stop, including for low-frequency routes.	3
4.5	<u>Strategy:</u> Ensure that transit information is available in multiple languages and formats due to the diverse populations of Los Angeles County, including via call centers, to address the transportation needs of members of the Target Populations who may not be proficient in English.	3
4.6	<u>Strategy:</u> Develop mobility management functions at subregional major transit centers and other locations.	3
4.7	<u>Strategy:</u> Promote agency-based mobility management functions to assist seniors and other members of the Target Populations connect with available transit and other transportation options, as well as to establish agency-level knowledge of local and regional transportation and effective specialized transportation programs.	1
<b>Goal 5 Enhance Accountable Performance Monitoring Systems: Enhance customer feedback and accountable performance monitoring systems to ensure that high quality is maintained.</b>		
5.1	<u>Strategy:</u> Expand annual passenger satisfaction surveys to include all publicly funded transportation services.	2
5.2	<u>Strategy:</u> Ensure continued attention to the quality of the ride for specialized transportation users.	2
5.3	<u>Strategy:</u> Adopt standard complaint resolution policies that are also applicable to municipal transit and Dial-A-Ride services, as well as to human service agencies that provide transportation services.	3
5.4	<u>Strategy:</u> Establish a performance measurement monitoring and reporting program for specialized transportation projects based on agency-established performance goals that also includes a customer satisfaction component and provides technical support to encourage the funding and implementation of projects that best address the transportation needs of the Target Populations.	3
5.5	<u>Strategy:</u> Develop connectivity performance standards among all service modes.	2



### Existing System and Potential Future Enhancements

#### Technical Enhancements to Operational System

##### G-Tel

When Metro announced the intention to latch the turnstiles at rail stations persons in the disabled community raised concerns that some people with disabilities who previously were able to access the trains would not be able to tap to gain access. In consultation with the disabled community The Office of Civil Rights and Wayside Systems developed a G-Tel, a hands free system that allows an individual with a disability to contact the Rail Operations Control center in order to have the accessible turnstile remotely opened. Metro is the only transit operation with such a system designed to facilitate the entry into our gated stations by persons with disabilities.

##### New Bus Design

The Office of Civil Rights and Operations jointly worked on redesigning the interior of new buses to make them more convenient and safer for persons with disabilities and older adults. Among the features now incorporated in every bus are:

- Q-Pod wheelchair securement systems
- Rear facing wheelchair positions that do not require securement
- Blue floor to demarcate areas for wheelchairs older adults and persons with disabilities
- Relabeling of priority seating areas as either reserved for wheelchairs or reserved for older adults and persons with disabilities
- Use of special custom fabric to better identify reserved seating areas
- Addition of a single flip up seat to accommodate walkers in addition to two wheel positions

##### Tactile Pathways & Directional Bars

Metro is the first U.S. transit agency to adopt the practice of installing tactile pathways to lead the visually impaired from the property line to a safe location on the train platform adjacent to where the doors on the train will open. This system is in general use in many countries around the world and increases safety and convenience for the blind, persons with visual impairments and older adults who may find it difficult to navigate stations. The tactile pathways are being installed on the recently opened Expo and Foothill extensions and all future rail lines. In addition all stations on the network are being retrofit by Operations with direction bars which identify where the car doors will be located when the train pulls into the station. This makes using the system more convenient and safer for the visually impaired.

##### Wayfindr

Wayfindr is an innovative new way finding system that uses Bluetooth beacons and a smartphone app to help the visually impaired navigate complex terminals such as Union Station or 7<sup>th</sup> and Metro Center. This is a joint project of the Office of Civil Rights and

Countywide Planning (Union Station) The system was developed by the Royal London Society for Blind and funded by Google. The system is currently being designed and installation in Union Station should be complete in 2017. It will be the first such system in a major bus and rail station in the United States.

#### Enhanced Bus Operator Training/Accessibility Fairs

In 2013 Metro Operations expanded the training provided to all bus operators to ensure that they are knowledgeable about the requirements of the ADA, that they know proper wheelchair securement technique and are sensitive to the needs of persons with disabilities. Refreshers are now provided every year. In addition the Office of Civil Rights now offers a program of Accessibility Fairs that visit each division to reinforce sensitive issues, knowledge of ADA responsibilities and wheelchair securement skills. The Accessibility Fair includes an agency wide wheelchair securement competition with prizes and trophies to recognize superior skills.

#### Mystery Rider Program

The Mystery Ride program managed by the Office of Civil Rights has been enhanced and expanded in recent years to ensure that a statistically valid check is made on the ADA compliance of our bus operations. The observers report on items such as courtesy towards individuals with disabilities, use of the ramp and kneeling features, wheelchair securement and handling of service animal requests. Bus operators may receive commendations, counseling or discipline based on the observations of the Mystery Riders.

#### New Light Rail Vehicles

The Kinkisharo light rail vehicles now being delivered to Metro incorporate several new features designed to improve accessibility and usability for persons with disabilities and older adults. These include designation of reserved seating pairs (rather than individual seats) for persons with disabilities or older adults, four positions for persons in wheelchairs instead of two with separate areas for bikes and luggage, blue colored floor to denote reserved areas for persons in wheelchairs.

#### Next Bus Information

Metro has been installing Next Bus signage at major bus stops such as Patsaouras Plaza to inform passengers about the next bus arrival times. In addition to the visual information Metro ITS has designed a system to also provide a 'push to listen' feature which allows persons with visual impairments to also obtain this real time schedule information.

#### Improved Visual Information Systems

The Transit Passenger Information System (TPIS) in Red and Purple Line was recently upgraded by ITS. The upgrade included making the text larger and ensuring sufficient color contrast was provided to make the message more legible and easier to read by persons with visual impairments and older adults.

### Hands-free Intercoms

Metro currently provides emergency and passenger information intercoms at all rail stations. The current units are ADA compliant, but do require a patron to use their hands to physical push a button located up to 48 inches above the floor to activate the system. A new intercom unit was specified by the Office of Civil Rights and designed by Creative Services. It is now being installed in new stations and includes a hands free activation system for persons with disabilities. Someone in a wheelchair or with limited reach range can now bump a 4" X 30" kick plate to activate the intercom and seek assistance.

### Braille Stops & Fleet Numbers

Neither the ADA nor California Title 24 requires transit agencies to provide Braille information at bus stops, or Braille fleet numbers on board vehicles. Stops and Zones has installed Braille stop information at 500 of the busiest bus stops and all bus and rail vehicles have fleet numbers posted in Braille to help visually impaired customers report complaints or commendations.

### ADA Complaint Process

Since 2011, the OCR, Customer Relations, Operations and ITS have worked together to improve the handling of complaints from passengers with disabilities. Improvements have been made in the receipt, classification, recording, investigation, oversight and notification of complaints involving persons with disabilities.

### Discounted Fare Programs

Federal Department of Transportation regulations require that Metro provide half price transit fares during off peak periods to older adults and persons with disabilities. As a result of funding obtained through local propositions Metro has significantly exceeded this minimum discount required by the Federal government. Currently older adults and persons with disabilities receive an 80% discount on single cash off peak fares, and a 57% discount on cash peak fares. In addition an 80% discount is provided for monthly passes and a 65% discount is offered on day passes which are valid at all times.

### New Lighting Criteria

In response to concerns raised by the community regarding the level of lighting in new rail stations the Office of Civil Rights engaged a lighting consultant to develop Metro lighting design criteria. The design criteria are being applied to new stations and rehabilitation projects to ensure that the lighting types and levels are designed to minimize issues for persons with visual impairments.

### Rancho Los Amigos Shuttle Service

The regular Metro bus routes serving the Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center in Downey are among the most popular services in the region for individuals using mobility devices. In order to respond to this demand for additional accessible capacity for mobility devices, Metro partners with Access Services to provide a dedicated shuttle service with a small bus capable of transporting up to five persons in mobility devices at the same time. The service operates Monday through Friday on a

regular schedule between the Metro Rail Willowbrook (Rosa Parks) Station on the Green and Blue lines, and Rancho Los Amigos, thus relieving the demand for accessible spaces on Metro routes 117 and 120.

## **Outreach Enhancements to Operational System**

### *Pilot Mobile Customer Service Centers*

Metro Customer Programs and Services have launched a Mobile Customer Service Center. The Mobile Center will allow Metro to visit drop in centers, senior centers or senior residences in order to make it easier and more convenient for older adults and persons with disabilities to sign up for reduced fare TAP cards.

### *Senior Transportation Expo*

The first annual Senior Transportation Expo was held at Union Station on October 11, 2016. About 300 older adults were invited to attend and hear presentations, and visit displays booths from Metro, municipal transit operators, Access Services and other transportation providers. The presentations and displays covered tips on using transit and alternative transportation systems. Metro had a new bus and the mobile customer service center on display. Signups for reduced fare TAP cards were also available.

### *Abilities Expo*

Each year the Office of Civil Rights joins with Access Services to provide a large presence at the Abilities Expo. The two agencies jointly staff a booth providing information on services available, installation of wheelchair tether straps and the staff provides answers to questions and concerns regarding the use of public transportation for persons with disabilities.

### *On the Move Riders Club*

The Office of Civil Rights initiated development of the On the Move Riders Club to provide travel training for older adults. Management of the program was turned over to the Community Relations program since their mission is more closely aligned with the promotion of outreach in the community.

### *New Passenger Orientation*

The Office of Civil Rights and Operations developed a program to introduce transit to riders who have recently become disabled. Metro staff and a bus visit the Rancho Los Amigos Hospital and the Braille Institute to provide an opportunity for individuals to practice boarding and alighting from actual Metro buses and receive information about using Metro. It also provides an excellent opportunity for operators to become familiar with different types of mobility devices and individuals with different types of disabilities.

### *Disabled Community Outreach*

The Office of Civil Rights works with various groups including the Regional Centers, Service Dog Training Organizations and the Abilities Expo to bring Metro to the community. The events provide an opportunity for members of the disabled community to meet with staff from Metro to discuss their mobility address and learn about the

programs and services provided by Metro. Metro also facilitates the training of service dogs aboard our bus and trains in support of riders with disabilities.

### Videos and Video Vignettes

In FY 2016 the Office of Civil Rights produced three videos and 19 video vignettes describing the accessibility features of our system and how to use them. The videos and vignettes are available on Metro.net and 2,500 copies of the content on DVDs were distributed free of charge to agencies and community groups that work with passengers with disabilities.

## **Potential Future Initiatives**

In addition to the many enhancements that have been introduced since 2011 the Office of Civil Rights in conjunction with other departments at Metro is pursuing several additional initiatives to improve the accessibility of our system for persons with disabilities and older adults. These initiatives include:

### **Operational**

#### Hands-free Elevators

In order to access underground or elevated it necessary for patrons in wheelchairs to utilize elevators. Person with limited or no use of their arms or hands may be unable to push the call and control buttons on elevators. Metro is investigating the installation of a hands free system to call the elevator and automatically direct the car to the appropriate floor. This system would improve the independence of our patrons with disabilities.

#### Stronger Signage for Reserved (Priority) Seating

Federal Department of Transportation regulations currently require transit agencies to identify areas in buses and railcars for priority seating for persons in wheelchairs, older adults and individuals with disabilities. The federal regulations do not mandate that passengers yield these seats when requested to accommodate persons with disabilities or older adults. In 2014 the California legislature passed Senate Bill 413 which enabled transit agencies to post signage indicating that yielding the seats is mandatory. Metro is monitoring the success of agencies in San Diego, San Diego and Sacramento that have implemented this rule. A recommendation may be brought forward if other California agencies are able to report improved compliance with the priority seating requirements.

#### Mandatory Wheelchair Securement

Metro is the only major transit property in California that does not require mandatory wheelchair securement on board transit buses. Every other major transit property in California including Santa Monica Transit, Foothill Transit and Long Beach Transit in Los Angeles County require wheelchairs to be secured before the bus leaves the stop. The use of seatbelts must remain optional based on the choice of the passenger. The Office of Civil Rights is working with Operations to implement mandatory forward facing wheelchair securement when about 70 percent of the bus fleet is equipped with Q-Pods or other similar systems that offer fast and easy securement. Mandatory forward facing securement will significantly improve the safety of passengers using wheelchairs and

other passengers on board Metro buses. New buses are also being equipped with rear facing wheelchair positions that allow passengers to safely ride without securement in the rear facing position if they prefer.

### Further Bus Enhancements

The Office of Civil Rights is working with Operations to ensure that additional accessibility improvements are included in the interior design of future bus acquisitions. The current options being evaluated include:

- Knurled stanchions located adjacent to reserved seating for persons with disabilities and older adults so that persons with visual impairments identify the location.
- The Office of Civil Rights is recommending that a limited number of new buses be purchased with more than two wheelchair positions in order to reduce the pass up of persons in wheelchairs on lines that are heavily used by patrons in wheelchairs. Several transit properties such as Muni in San Francisco, the RTA in Las Vegas and Valley Transit in Phoenix are purchasing buses with 3 and 4 wheelchair positions per bus to respond to the increase riders with disabilities due to the aging population.

### Grade Crossing Protection

The California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) requires that light rail pedestrian crossing be protected with swing gates when they are located at stations in dedicated rights of way but are not equipped with automatic gates. The Commission requires that these gates swing out away from the tracks, which means they must be pulled by pedestrians. This effectively creates a barrier for persons without full use of their arms. In FY 2017 Metro will initiate discussions with the PUC on a redesign of the protection that maintains safety but does not create a barrier for persons with disabilities.

### Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) & Metro

The Office of Extraordinary Innovation (OEI) is negotiating with TNCs through the Unsolicited Proposal Process to implement new first and last mile options to support Metro transit services. The Office of Civil Rights is working with OEI to ensure that any new pilot or permanent services are fully ADA compliant. Countywide Planning and Development worked with OEI to submit a grant proposal for funding to develop a pilot ride sharing program under the FTA Mobility on Demand Sandbox Program that partners with TNC.

### TNCs & Access

The Office of Extraordinary Innovation is working with Access Services to identify if there are opportunities to incorporate TNCs and/or microtransit options into the family of services that are offered under the ADA Paratransit banner or as supplemental service to improve mobility for persons with disabilities by increasing coverage, span of service or reducing the booking window. Through the use of these services, we have the potential to provide same day or on-demand mobility services for our customers at

competitive rates.

### **Outreach**

#### **Countywide Forum on Coordination and Integration of Transportation for Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities**

The Consolidated Transportation Services agency at Access Services, in conjunction with Metro is planning for the first annual County Wide Forum on Coordination and Integration of Transportation for Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities. The forum will include consultant specialists in gerontology and mental health as well as local governmental and non-governmental providers of transportation to older adults and persons with disabilities.

#### **Mobile Wheelchair Strapping and Marking**

The Office of Civil Rights is introducing a free Mobile Wheelchair Strapping and Marking Outreach Program in FY 17. This program will install straps or provide markings on wheelchairs to enable passengers to have their wheelchairs be quickly and correctly secured when they ride a Metro bus. This will help supplement a similar program currently being provided by Access Services at its eligibility facility.