Metro

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Board Report

File #: 2020-0683, **File Type:** Plan   **Agenda Number:** 20.

OPERATIONS, SAFETY & CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 19, 2020

SUBJECT: 2020 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE PLAN

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION

ADOPT the 2020 Customer Experience Plan.

ISSUE

Customer experience is the sum total of experiences Metro customers have at every step of their journey. Metro's goal is to minimize pain points, maximize smooth, uneventful experiences, and find opportunities for occasional surprise and delight.

In June 2018, the Metro Board of Directors (Board) approved Motion 38.1 (Attachment B), requesting that Metro staff develop an annual customer experience plan. In February 2019, staff submitted a report on Motion 38.1 to the Operations, Safety and Customer Experience Committee (Attachment C) outlining steps to align annual customer experience plans with Metro's *Vision 2028 Strategic Plan* Goal 2, which calls on Metro to "deliver outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system." Metro's first Customer Experience Plan is attached (Attachment A).

BACKGROUND

Development of Metro's first Customer Experience (CX) Plan started with the hiring of the first Executive Officer for Customer Experience in April 2020. The 2020 CX Plan was developed on a compressed schedule, and its recommendations were developed in response to social media comments, customer survey results (including a June 2020 survey to obtain feedback from customers during the COVID-19 pandemic), and interviews and discussions with individuals ranging from Board members and staff to bus operators.

Looking forward, staff plans to also collaborate with Metro advisory committees and community-based organizations, to review and improve customer experience as a continuous process, and to issue annual reports.

The purpose of the 2020 CX Plan is to take an honest look at pain points riders tell us about, and to make improvements that are responsive to those issues. The Plan examines ten areas for improvement, ranging from service reliability to how Metro addresses homelessness. The Plan

makes recommendations which will become action items following Board adoption of this report, and proposes Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

DISCUSSION

The following vision guides development of Metro's customer experience plans: "Our goal is to always put you first - your safety, your time, your comfort, and your peace of mind - when we connect you to people and places that matter to you."

Initiative 2.3 of Vision 2028 commits Metro to dedicate staff resources to develop a comprehensive approach to improve customer experiences. Vision 2028 goes on to describe the following specific initiatives:

- Develop a unifying vision and strategy for enhancing customer experience
- Improve customer journey and touch points, and
- Use data analytics to benchmark and measure system performance in meeting customer satisfaction targets.

Metro's first Customer Experience Plan focuses on fundamental aspects of service to provide customers with a reliable, safe, and comfortable experience. As these fundamentals get better, Metro can shift its attention in future plans to tackle additional areas for improvement, as well as go the extra mile to surprise and delight customers in a way that distinguishes the Metro brand.

Key Performance Indicators
To develop Key Performance Indicators (KPI's), staff considered seven stages of the customer journey, from planning a trip to getting from the bus or train to the final destination. Based on this assessment, staff created a new, statistically sound, random sample survey (called the Customer Experience Survey) that asks customers to rate 40 aspects of service. The first survey was conducted in October 2020. Results are currently being processed and will be used to inform budget priorities as well as the 2021 Customer Experience Plan.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The cost of Customer Experience Plan initiatives will be considered relative to other Metro priorities, and approved during Metro budget processes, and the survey referenced above will help inform budget priorities.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

This 2020 Customer Experience Plan supports strategic plan Goal 2, "Deliver outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system."

NEXT STEPS

Upon adoption of this report by the Metro Board of Directors, staff will work with business units throughout Metro to implement action items subject to funding availability. Staff will also begin

development of a 2021 Plan, which will include a focus on organizational culture, and on the needs of specific categories of riders such as people with disabilities, non-English speakers, people without smartphones, women and girls, youth, and senior citizens. Staff will collaborate with Metro advisory committees and community-based organizations in these future efforts. Lastly, staff will complete graphic design of the 2020 CX Plan and release a final edition.

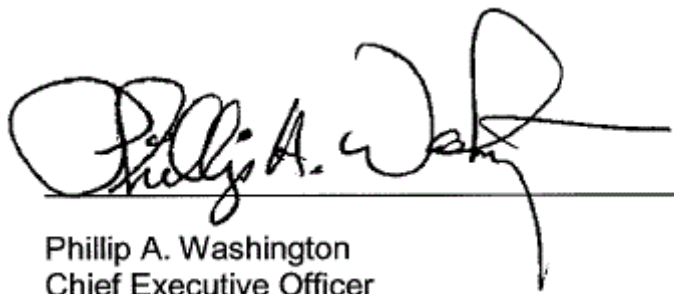## ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - 2020 Customer Experience Plan
Attachment B - Motion 38.1 NextGen Bus Study Service Parameters
Attachment C - Customer Experience Motion 38.1 Response

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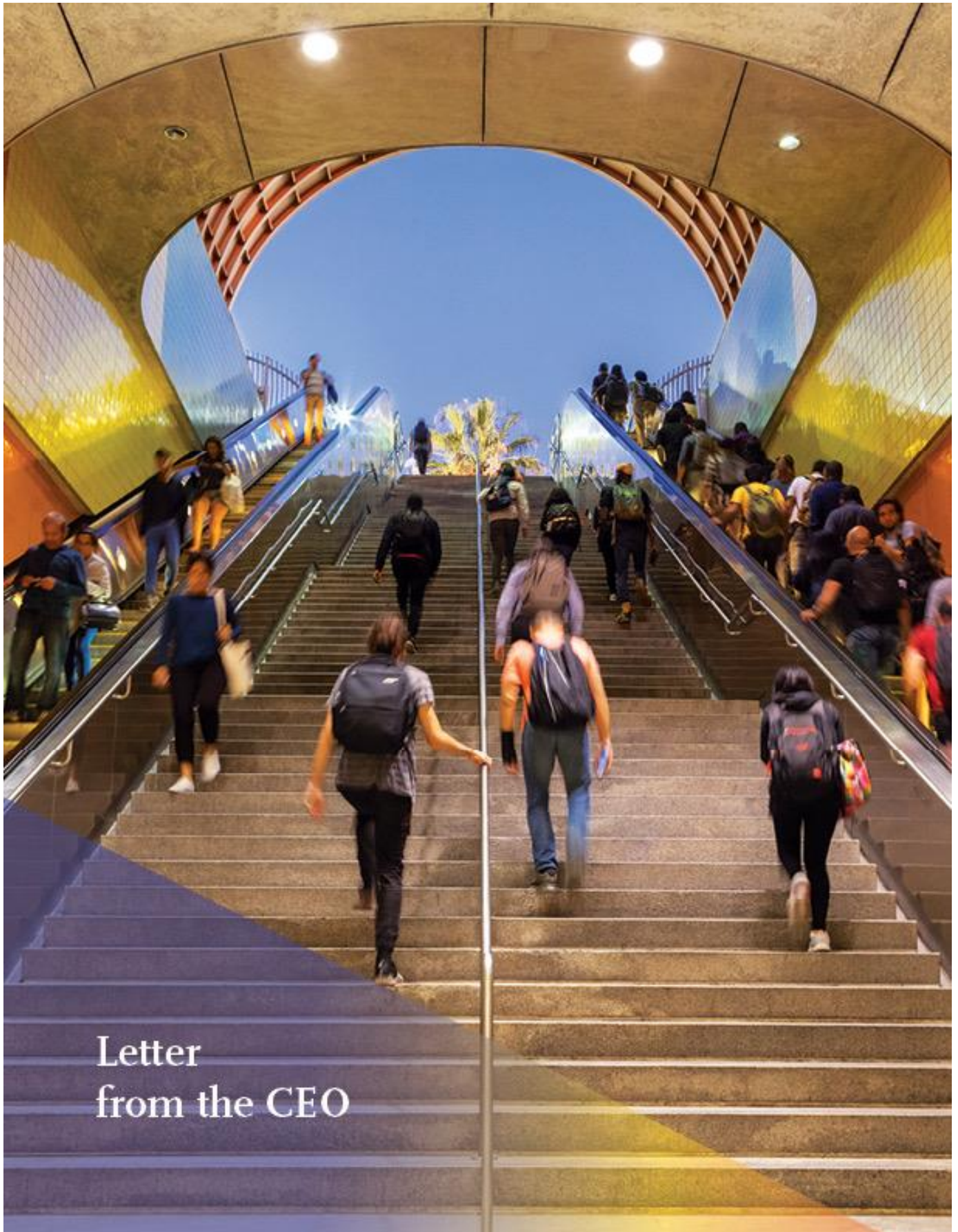Reviewed by: Nadine Lee, Chief of Staff, (213) 922-7950

Phillip A. Washington
Chief Executive Officer

Customer Experience
Plan 2020

M Metro

Letter
from the CEO

Dear Metro Customers,

As Metro delivers the largest transit expansion program in the country in the coming years, we want to give equal attention to delivering excellent customer experiences.

Welcome to the first Metro *Customer Experience Plan*. The purpose of this Plan is to take an honest look at pain points riders tell us about, and to make improvements that are responsive to those issues.

Our vision is to put you first – your safety, your time, your comfort, and your peace of mind – when we connect you to people and places that matter to you.

All Metro riders deserve no less. And, for that reason, we are committed to listening to our customers and improving our services.
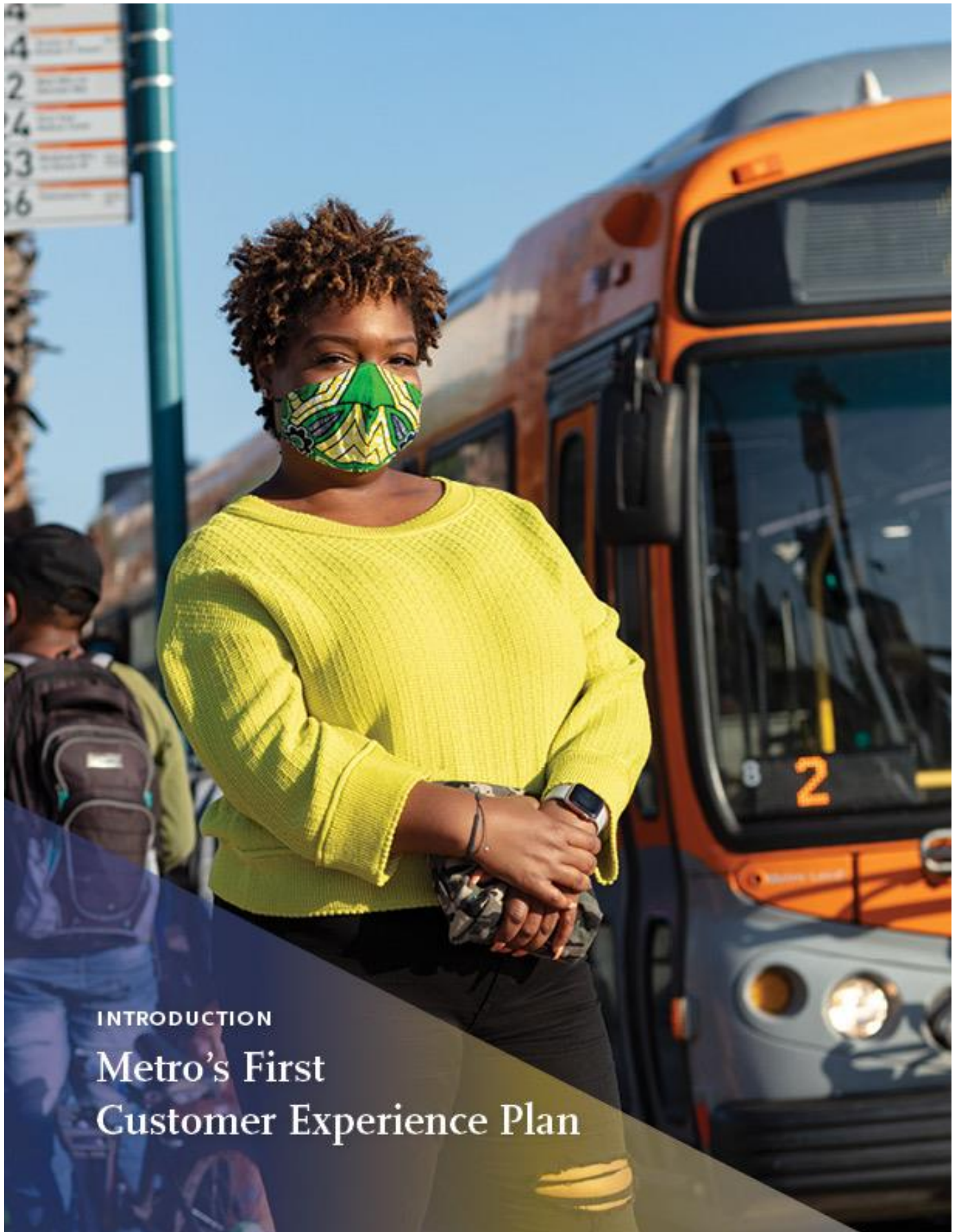
Thank you for supporting public transit.

Sincerely,

Phillip A. Washington

Chief Executive Officer

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INTRODUCTION

Metro's First
Customer Experience Plan

3. Introducing Metro's First *Customer Experience Plan*

Imagine you wake up hours before dawn in Long Beach, trying not to wake your spouse and children, and getting ready to get to your job at LAX guiding airplanes to the runway. Punctuality is deeply important to your employer. Three tardies in one year, and you are out. You glance at your Transit app to confirm when to leave the house. The bus comes right on time, the bus operator greets you with a smile as you activate your Metro Pass, and you are happy to find a seat so you can catch a few more minutes of sleep. The journey to work is a good start for what will be a very full day.

You have your own story and your own journey, and we want to provide you with an outstanding customer experience such as the one described above when you take Metro.

What is Customer Experience (CX)

Customer Experience is the sum total of experiences Metro customers have at every step of their journey. Metro's goal is to minimize pain points, maximize smooth, uneventful experiences, and find opportunities for occasional surprise and delight.

About this Plan

This plan, Metro's first CX Plan, flows from the agency's Vision 2028 Plan, which called for delivering "outstanding trip experiences" to Metro customers.

Why deliver outstanding trip experiences? Because <u>you</u> are important. You need to get around and you should be able to do so easily, comfortably, quickly and safely – without frustration, uncertainty, or anxiety. The 2020 *Customer Experience Plan* focuses on the experiences of Metro Bus and Metro Rail riders and what we can do to improve them.

As Metro works to improve customer experience, the following vision guides us:

> **Our goal is to put you first – your safety, your time, your comfort, and your peace of mind – when we connect you to people and places that matter to you.**

Pleasant, Not Painful

Outstanding trip experiences should be smooth all the way through, but that's not always the case.

For this CX Plan, Metro listened to input from thousands of riders through surveys, social media, complaints, and community meetings. We also interviewed a range of people affiliated with Metro, from Board members to bus operators. Based on all the input, the following 10 priority areas for improvement emerged:

Metro Bus reliability	Speed
Accuracy of real-time info	Crowding
Metro Bus frequency	Personal security
Bus stops	Homelessness
Ease of payment	Cleanliness

This Plan recaps what customers tell us about each of the 10 areas for improvement, looks at what solutions are in the pipeline, and recommends what Metro can do to provide relief. These 10 areas are

fundamental to a reliable, safe, and comfortable experience. As the fundamentals get better, Metro can shift its attention in future plans to tackle additional areas for improvement, as well as go the extra mile to surprise and delight customers in a way that distinguishes the Metro brand.

While this is a Metro plan, it is also a call to action to regional partners to do their part to improve the experience of their residents who take transit. This is especially important for regional issues like homelessness, and for local infrastructure that supports transit users – such as bus lanes and shelters.
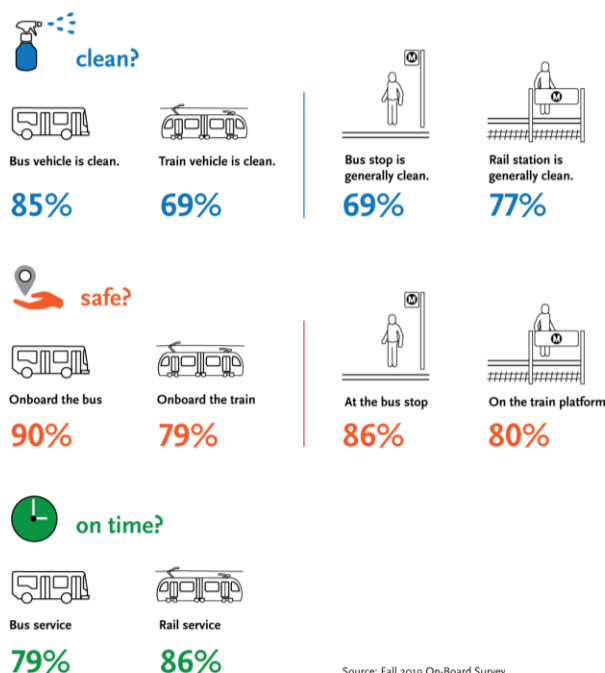
Standing Out for the Right Reasons

A good customer experience is often invisible, but these areas for improvement have not been. Surveys show that the overall satisfaction of Metro riders is quite high, but our customers let us know when there are exceptions. And since customers are clearly taking notice, so should we.

To get better, we need to prioritize improving the customer experience, and be honest and transparent about it. You will see that this plan quickly moves from platitudes to plain talk about the root cause of an issue and how to improve. We will get into the weeds because there's no substitute for a deep dive into the complexities of each issue. The more we think about the issues here though, the less we hope you'll have to think about them. So if you are looking for a high-level overview, you may want to stop after the Executive Summary. But if you want detail, just keep reading!

Understanding Your Pain

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Metro riders were fairly satisfied with service. In the Fall 2019 on-board Customer Satisfaction survey, 90% of riders said they are satisfied with Metro (90% bus and 89% train), although it should be noted that riders who left the system over the last few years were not included in the survey. Also, satisfaction with some key service aspects was noticeably lower than 90%:

We asked our riders, is Metro...

clean?

| Bus vehicle is clean. | Train vehicle is clean. | Bus stop is generally clean. | Rail station is generally clean. |
| 85% | 69% | 69% | 77% |

safe?

| Onboard the bus | Onboard the train | At the bus stop | On the train platform |
| 90% | 79% | 86% | 80% |

on time?

| Bus service | Rail service |
| 79% | 86% |

Source: Fall 2019 On-Board Survey

During the COVID-19 pandemic, several additional issues surfaced in a Spring 2020 online COVID Recovery Survey of Metro customers:

‹ For bus riders, the top two improvements they wanted to see were enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of vehicle interiors, and reduced crowding.

‹ For train riders, the top two improvements they wanted to see were enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of vehicle interiors, and doing more to address homelessness.

All Riders Have a Choice and a Voice

The 2020 *Metro Customer Experience Plan* reflects our understanding that while low-income customers often have fewer attractive options for transportation, they often do have a choice. The 2018 UCLA Falling Transit Ridership Study demonstrated that not all low-income riders in the LA area are fully transit dependent. Many customers who used to be considered transit dependent have been able to purchase cars. And we know anecdotally that some riders choose to bicycle or ride scooters, or occasionally splurge for a Lyft or Uber. In today's world, Metro knows that it needs to provide quality service to earn loyalty from **all** its customers, and give riders a voice through surveys and engagement.

Call-Out Box: Better Bus

A new Metro effort called Better Bus seeks to put bus rider needs on equal par with those of rail riders, by making improvements to bus services and amenities. Metro has put a lot of effort into extending the rail system, and the purpose of Better Bus is to align Metro around elevating investments that improve bus speed, ease, safety and comfort.

Bus riders make up more than 70% of Metro's ridership, and they are disproportionately from Equity Focus Communities (communities Metro defines as high need based on income, race, and car ownership). This underscores the importance of improving bus service to provide social and racial equity for Metro riders.

Part of the purpose of Better Bus is to help push Metro's NextGen Bus Plan forward as Metro revenues recover from COVID-19 economic conditions. NextGen will restructure the bus network to be more relevant to today's travel patterns, provide more frequent service on key corridors, particularly off-peak, and improve the speed of service via transit supportive infrastructure such as the 5th and 6th Street Bus Only Lanes in Downtown LA. Better Bus will go beyond this to make other aspects of the bus experience an ongoing priority, including on-time performance, bus stop amenities, better security, improved cleanliness, and better real-time information.

Metro bus riders will be at the center of the Better Bus effort, and customer feedback will be used to drive improvements.

Metro plans to review and improve Customer Experience as a continuous process, and will issue annual reports. Future annual reports can go beyond what is covered in this Plan to address additional modes and areas for improvement.

Call-Out Box: Metro messages to protect <u>riders from COVID-19</u>

Consistent with the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Seal of Commitment . Metro advises the public to stay home when sick, ride transit for essential travel only, use face coverings, and physically distance as much as possible. Also, Metro continues to use bus rear-door boarding for customers who are able to do so, and is running 80% of service even with just 50% of normal ridership. And to ensure riders have access to masks, Metro distributed over 50,000 wash-and-reuse face coverings to riders who didn't have them.

Our Commitments To Health & Safety

Our system has joined public transit agencies across this country, including Metro, in committing to making every ride safer — and we need your help.

WE'RE DOING OUR PART		YOU'RE DOING YOURS
Creating science-based policies	*OFFICIAL GUIDANCE*	Following all health & safety rules
Cleaning & disinfecting more frequently	*PROTECTING EACH OTHER*	Wearing face coverings & washing hands
Sharing information about safe rides	*INFORMED CHOICES*	Respecting fellow riders' space
Keeping our employees healthy	*HEALTH FIRST*	Staying home if you're sick

To learn more about APTA's Health and Safety Commitments Program, visit apta.com/commitments. An APTA Program in partnership with Metro.

4. Executive Summary (TBD)

So, what did we find when we did a deep dive into the pain points that customers report? Here are some highlights:

Ø In the Metro Bus reliability section you will find a lot of detail on how we can avoid cancelling a run that leaves you stranded at your bus stop. It involves having enough budget, hiring enough bus operators, and having maximum staffing flexibility to make sure that assignments don't get canceled. Metro Operations has a commendable goal to limit cancellations to under 1% of scheduled runs, and this Plan outlines what is needed to meet that goal.

Ø In the Accuracy of real-time information section we look at what it takes to give accurate arrival time predictions so that riders know when their bus or train is coming. This was among the most complex issues in the Plan. We propose the use of metrics to pinpoint and remedy problems, and an aggressive schedule to roll out real-time information feeds to power Metro and third-party apps.

Ø The Metro Bus frequency section is our shortest chapter because so much work has already been done on the NextGen Bus Plan to create a dense network of frequent service. All that is needed is funding to put it in place, and of course riders to ride. This Plan includes a renewal of Metro's commitment to the NextGen Bus Plan as revenues rebound after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ø The Bus stops section outlines a bold, although unfunded, vision for better and cleaner bus stops that have shelter, seating and other amenities to improve customers' waiting experiences. This will require help from each jurisdiction that provides Metro riders with bus stops.

Ø The Ease of payment section chronicles recent improvements to the TAP payment system, including a new mobile app. It also examines what needs to be done to ensure equity focus communities can enjoy the benefits of TAP and access LIFE low-income discounts, and to ensure cash paying customers can access the same discounts as other riders.

Ø The Speed chapter provides a sneak peek at the next round of bus-only lanes to reduce travel time, and a comprehensive study to identify areas where speeds can be safely increased on the light rail system through signal optimization.

Ø The Crowding section looks at Metro actions to address recent concerns about social distancing.

Ø The Personal security section zeroes in on ways to continue to reduce crime on Metro and help all customers feel safe, with a focus on the experiences of women, and changes coming to address concerns about racial justice. It also recommends wider dissemination of the MetroWatch app to give customers an easy way to report issues.

Ø   The Homelessness section, recognizing the magnitude and urgency of homelessness on Metro, recommends measures to move towards reducing Metro homelessness by 50%, and proposes one concept for how Metro might dispatch social workers to address reported conditions and behaviors that affect rider health or safety.

Ø   And finally a Cleanliness section recognizes the importance of odor reduction and disinfection, and looks at a range of possible cleaning enhancements.

You may notice that this Plan has a significant emphasis on bus. That is intentional. Metro Rail gets a lot of focus, but Metro Bus carries over 70% of Metro riders and carries a disproportionate number of riders from equity focus communities. That's not to say this Plan ignores the needs of Metro Rail customers. There is a big focus on Metro Rail in the Personal security, Homelessness, and Cleanliness sections in particular.

Call-Out Box: Near-term Improvements

Many plans focus on the long term, and end up sitting on a shelf and never getting implemented. The Metro *Customer Experience Plan*, however, will tie directly into Metro's accountability systems that require regular reporting of progress. Moreover, the Plan calls for consideration of five near-term actions:

1.   Test a program that quickly identifies customers impacted by a missed run or pass-up in real time, and offers them a **free ride code** for an on-demand shared ride service. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirements.

2.   Reduce homelessness on Metro by deploying **unarmed security ambassadors** to fill gaps in terminus station assistance and intercede with people who are experiencing homelessness on Metro to get them the help they need. Also: cost effective expansion of homeless outreach teams including on-call nursing, mental health and addiction services; temporary short-term shelter pending housing from local and regional partners; and regular, statistically valid counts to evaluate results. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirements.

3.   Test a flexible dispatch concept whereby Metro responds to safety and security issues on buses and trains by **dispatching appropriate staff**: from homeless outreach or mental health workers to unarmed security ambassadors or law enforcement as the situation demands. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirements.

4.   Test an **elevator attendant** program similar to the successful program at BART to deter crime, human waste and drug use in elevators, and make them safe and pleasant for seniors, people with disabilities, travelers with luggage, and others. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirements.

5.   And finally, while Metro cannot guarantee social distancing on all routes at all times, Metro will introduce a new NextGen bus service configuration in December 2020 that is

expected to **improve physical distancing** between Metro customers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Call-Out Box: Best Practices

This Plan highlights customer experience issues you may face as a Metro rider, but we also call out successes where we see them. Here are a few:

1. Metro System Security and Law Enforcement (SSLE) sponsors programs to help riders experiencing homelessness, connecting over 700 people to shelter and services over the last six months.

2. Metro Operations does regular, detailed inspections of train stations to find things that need fixing, and the information is entered into iPads and used to dispatch teams to do repairs promptly. This is an industry-leading practice.

3. Our review of the TAP website, run by Metro Finance, found it to be user friendly. That's not always the case with transit websites, so definitely something to celebrate.

4. Metro Information Technology Systems (ITS) developed a user-friendly MetroWatch app for customers to report security concerns, addressing a key pain point. This app is now used by thousands of riders.

5. Metro Civil Rights deploys mystery shoppers, many of them people with disabilities and Limited English Proficient (LEP) riders to verify that Metro delivers the service needed by these riders. This is another industry-leading practice.

6. Metro Human Capital & Development (HC&D) goes the extra mile to hire bus operators, even paying for commercial license applications. This shows a "whatever it takes" spirit that will be important as Metro staffs up to avoid Missed Assignments.

7. Metro Communications has been integral to many customer experience improvements – working with local communities to get agreement on proposed bus lanes, distributing 50,000 face coverings to riders who didn't have one, and partnering with the five-star Transit trip-planning app, and retiring Metro's previous two-star app..

8. Metro's Office of Extraordinary Innovation (OEI) successfully tested automatic bus lane enforcement cameras to discourage cars and trucks from blocking bus lanes, keeping lanes open so that bus riders get where they need to go more quickly.

9. Metro Planning launched a new, comprehensive Customer Experience survey to provide data to support future Customer Experience Plans. This information will be essential to help Metro understand customer needs, and to help prioritize improvements.

Customer Experience Culture

As we look to the future, customer experience can't just be a top down exercise. It requires a customer-first focus and culture at every level of the agency in order to be successful. And it requires that Metro's leadership and employees be able to see issues from a customer perspective, and ask themselves tough questions like, "Is good, good enough?" and "How do we go the extra mile to really WOW people." It can't just be about designing services that are easy to deliver. The customer must come first, and this requires a change in mindset.

Call-Out Box: Love from Metro Riders

Metro values feedback from riders. Rider feedback gives us the insights we need to improve, and it bolsters our motivation when we know how much the improvements mean to you. We also love to get compliments when Metro earns them. Even as we work to eliminate pain points and improve the customer experience, our morale is buoyed by this love from our riders:

- "I would just like to thank Metro for continuing to serve the community during the pandemic and all of their bus operators who put themselves more at risk everyday to get us where we need to go. Thank You." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)
- "We were amazed by each station, and the thought that went into incorporating aspects of the neighborhood into the art."   (rider comment)
- "I love metro and will continue to ride it by doing my part and taking precautions :)" (COVID-19 Survey Comment)
- "Thank you for your services and for caring about your customers. I appreciate you." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)
- "Thanks very much! Keep Metro strong for the people!"(COVID-19 Survey Comment)

Many comments recognize the essential workers at Metro for helping other essential workers get where they need to go during the COVID-19 pandemic. This report is dedicated to all the brave Angelenos who continue to help others through the pandemic, even at risk to themselves and their families, and to those who lost their lives due to COVID-19.

Areas for Improvement
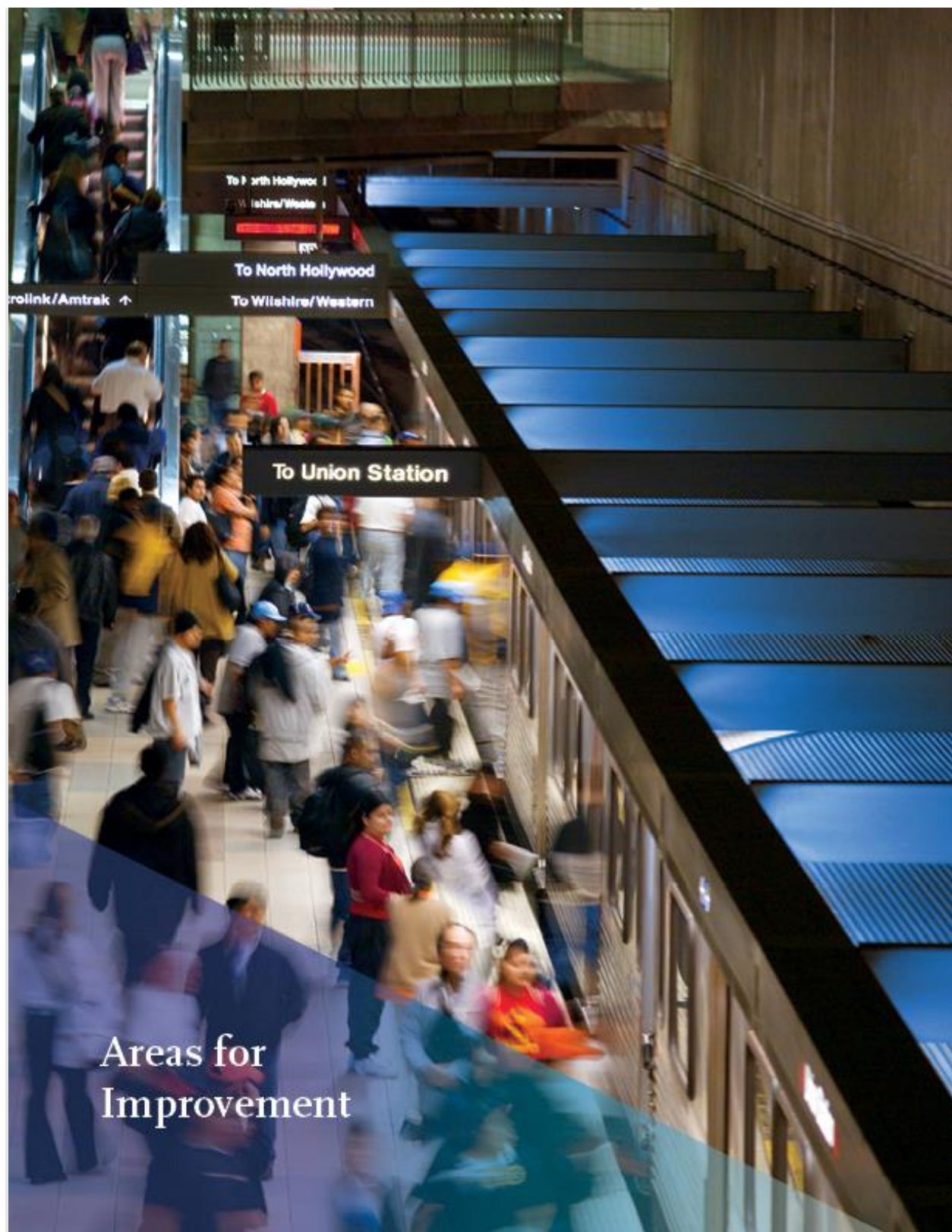
5. Areas for Improvement

5.01 Metro Bus reliability

Metro bus riders want service they can rely on to consistently get where they are going on time, and to catch connecting services. Missed runs, delays or pass-ups can mean missed transfer connections, and being late to work, school, a medical appointment or to day care pickup. And when these things happen on a regular basis, riders have to budget extra time … just in case Metro is late. Here are some recent customer comments:

‹ "The main reason I avoided taking the bus before COVID-19 is because they rarely run on time." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)

‹ "A lot of times the trains and buses are extremely late. You should have better control." (COVID-19 Survey Comment, Spanish language)

‹ "The service provided by Metro is completely careless, the buses are constantly delayed, coming at random intervals and very dirty." (complaint to Customer Relations)

‹ "I spent 75 minutes waiting for a bus. I don't know if the bus before was early, or the following bus was late. It makes them very unpredictable." (complaint to Customer Relations)

‹ "The bus that was supposed to arrive at 4:54 never arrived. The bus either never arrives or always arrived late. This is very inconvenient for all of us passengers who are attempting to make it to work on time." (complaint to Customer Relations)

‹ "For the last two weeks the bus schedules have been altered with no notification. For instance, schedule buses are not arriving, are arriving at later times and at times ignoring bus stops by not stopping." (complaint to Customer Relations)

‹ "Please understand that a 20 minute bus delay can mean an hour wait for train users that rely on public transportation." (complaint to Customer Relations)

Missed Bus Runs

Delays can occur for many reasons, including external factors like traffic. Missed bus runs, however, are more within Metro's control. A missed run is a scheduled bus that gets canceled. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, missed runs usually occurred due to bus operator shortages. While that issue has receded during the pandemic because fewer bus operators have been needed to run reduced service, the issue is likely to return as service is restored.

Given that missed runs can cause huge problems for impacted riders, for example loss of a job or fines for late pickup at day care, the ambitious 1% cancelled assignment limit set by Metro Operations is commendable. If 1% of all runs are cancelled, that would translate to a bus customer who rides one round trip each weekday experiencing a missed run no more than once every 10 weeks. Actual cancelled assignments are closer to 5% though. While Metro Operations limits the damage by selecting cancellations that have less impact possible, e.g. shorter runs, it is important to reduce cancelled assignments.

As a point of comparison, Metro Rail Operations rarely misses a scheduled train pullout. This is a function of a higher Operator Assignment Ratio (OAR) for rail, at 1.34, versus bus at 1.18-1.20 (the Operator Assignment Ratio is the ratio of total operators on staff vs. total needed to cover all assignments, accounting for absences). The difference between bus and rail also reflects that rail operators are promoted from bus operator ranks, whereas bus operators are recruited from the outside (which is more difficult). To achieve a 1% cancelled assignment limit for buses may require additional staffing (higher OAR), and a multifaceted strategy addressing:

- recruitment
- hiring
- retention
- compensation
- training
- working conditions
- absences and leave
- having adequate extra bus operators on hand (called extra boards) to cover for absences
- overtime budget to enable callback of operators as needed
- work rules
- loss of bus operators to other bus agencies
- movement of bus operators into supervisory positions or into rail operations

Metro's Bus Operator Task Force, which is composed of Metro Operations and Human Capital and Development (HC&D) staff, has made strides in recruitment and hiring through job fairs, community partnerships and innovations such as paying for candidates to apply for the required license, however more challenges lie ahead. Having adequate capacity to serve additional ridership from possible fareless (free fare) programs could require a lot of recruitment and hiring to avoid cancelled assignments. Therefore, it will be important that Metro Operations and HC&D continue to improve recruitment, hiring, compensation, training and retention. It will also be important to provide Metro Operations and HC&D maximum latitude and resources to meet the challenge.

Pass-ups

A pass-up, when a bus passes one or more passengers waiting at a bus stop, is another common complaint. During the COVID-19 pandemic, bus operators have been given more discretion to pass-up riders to avoid crowding in the interest of public health. Under current Metro procedures, bus operators are required to report pass-ups and the reason for them (e.g. unsafe/overcrowded conditions or all wheelchair securement areas full). As the pandemic comes to a close, it will be important to ensure that Metro Operations works with bus operators to reduce pass-ups.

Pass-ups can also result from bus operators not being able to see passengers standing in the dark at night or before dawn, so lighting improvements are important.

<u>Other Delay Factors</u>

Another factor that can cause bus delays is mechanical failures, although this is not a major cause of cancelled assignments. As a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for this area, Metro tracks Mean Miles Between Mechanical Failures Requiring Bus Exchange (MMBMF). Metro does not currently achieve its goal for this KPI, which is to incur at least 5,183 miles between failures. A key factor is the age of the fleet and greater maintenance required by articulated buses.

Customers are also delayed by detours required by road maintenance or special events. And, of course, traffic congestion in mixed flow lanes is another source of delay. See the Speed section for a discussion of transit priority and bus-only lanes that help buses beat traffic congestion.

Recommendations:
1. By January 15, 2021 Metro Operations to specify the Operator Assignment Ratio needed to meet the 1% cancelled assignment limit for consideration in the FY22 budget. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirements to move to a 1.25 OAR for example.

2. By March 1, 2021, Metro's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to establish a process for budget flexibility to move funding between categories (e.g. between authorized headcount, overtime and hiring bonuses) and to more nimbly add service as needed mid-year to meet ridership demand. This is especially important due to uncertainty about the pace of ridership restoration post-COVID-19.

3. By April 1, 2021, Metro Marketing and OEI to work with Customer Care to implement a short-term pilot program that quickly identifies customers impacted by a missed run or pass-up in real time, and offers them in real time a free ride code for an on-demand shared ride service. This should also meet the needs of people with disabilities, possibly through Access Services. This will help customers get where they are going on time, and show them that Metro truly cares about their well-being. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirement.

4. By June 30, 2021, Metro's Bus Operator Task Force to develop options and recommendations for ways to meet the 1% cancelled assignment limit (subject to discussion with Metro labor representatives). Specific options to consider include:

    o Fast track hiring for licensed commercial drivers and former and current transit agency bus operators, and flexibility to hire them directly into full time positions

    o Bus operator applicants being able to shadow a bus operator for a day to see what the job entails

    o Continuous mentorship of bus operators for the first year, beyond the current three-week period, to improve retention

    o Possible milestone bonuses to boost retention (e.g. after two years of service)

    o Reevaluation of shift bidding and work rules to provide as much latitude as possible to more finely tailor extra board assignments to days and locations where the need is expected to be greatest based on historical patterns. The goal is to provide as much flexibility as possible to fill potential Missed Assignments on short notice when needed to avoid a missed run

o   Evaluation of improvements in working conditions to give bus operators the support they need for work/life balance

o   Evaluation of pooling some extra boards across divisions (which may require cross-training on different bus equipment and different routes), borrowing from rail extra boards or operations supervisors who have recent bus operating experience, or allowing part-time operators to cover assignments on short notice when there are no other options to avoid a cancelled assignment

o   Considering use of technology to give division markup staff more tools to fill assignments at the last minute. For example, look at software/apps used by school districts to quickly schedule substitute teachers to ensure all classrooms are covered

5.   By June 30, 2021, the Better Bus Stops working group to work with Metro Bus Operations and Metro Stops and Zones to identify locations where inadequate lighting causes pass-ups, and provide recommendations on incentivizing municipalities to add lighting (or push-button beacons as used by Big Blue Bus in Santa Monica).

6.   By May 1, 2021, Metro Operations to develop a plan for divisions to communicate revised pass-up procedures with each bus operator multiple times when COVID-19 dissipates, and confirm that each bus operator understands what is expected.

5.02 Accuracy of real-time info

When customers wait for their bus or train, they want to know when it will come. Some riders may be on their way to work. Others may be on their way to an important appointment, or to pick up their children at day care. In each of these examples, customers may feel stress or anxiety because they're not sure if they can make it on time to their destination. And it's even more stressful when their phone app or the digital prediction display (if there is one) shows a bus is coming in say eight minutes, but the bus doesn't show, and neither the display nor their app offers explanation.

In a Metro Customer Satisfaction Survey, conducted in 2017, 37% of bus riders and 33% of train riders said they are dissatisfied with arrival information. And 61% of frequent bus riders and 78% of former riders rate bus arrival data as unreliable or very unreliable.
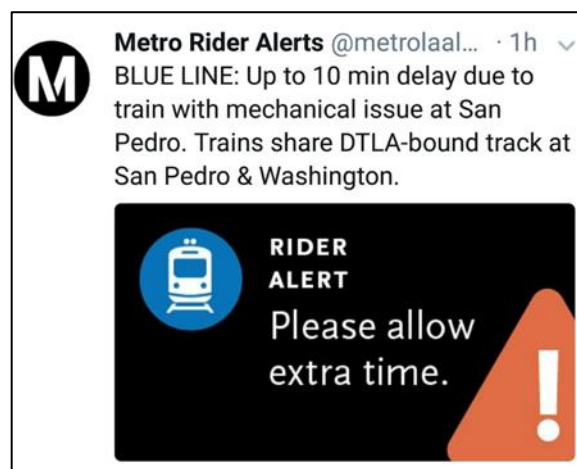
‹   "I did download the new transit app but I find it's not very consistent in determining when the next buses are arriving." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)

‹   "The bus never came!!!... the app says it's gonna have one at 8:35 and 8:44, but we don't know why there's no bus show up!" (complaint to Customer Relations)

‹   "Bus was supposed to pick me up at 5:20-21. It was 7-8 minutes late making it impossible to make my connecting buses that your trip planner planned out for me. We need dependable bus service." (complaint to Customer Relations)

‹   "I waited at the bus stop for 40 minutes. Google had told me it would be there and kept refreshing to later time." (complaint to Customer Relations)

‹   "Need more notice when on detour and need to let passengers know how to get to another point if there is one." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)

Unfortunately, there is no single silver bullet to fix real-time information problems. Sometimes traffic conditions make predictions difficult. And other times it can be a Metro-related cause such as:

‹   Inaccurate or missing vehicle location data (due to computer hardware, software, or communication system issues)

‹   Missing information about cancelled runs, detours, out-of-service vehicles, information on bus bridges when train service disruptions occur, or road calls due to bus breakdowns, and the inability of prediction systems to process those kinds of information

‹   Aging computer systems that can experience breakdowns

‹   Inconsistencies in the real-time information customers receive across various media due to computer processing and communication latencies

Metro riders should not have to pay a price for these problems though, so Metro's interdepartmental Real-time Information Team is working to address each of these issues. For example, new routers were recently installed on buses, and staff is developing procedures to keep them properly configured and maintained. The new routers will improve the accuracy of real-time information by identifying the location of buses every few seconds, rather than every few minutes.

Also, Metro Information Technology Systems (ITS) is developing a more advanced prediction engine that can use data on cancelled runs, detours, out-of-service vehicles, and road calls, and staff is developing new operating procedures to digitize and feed that kind of information to the prediction engine in real time.

As real-time system improvements are made, it will be important for Metro to collaborate and share information with other transit agencies in LA County. This is especially important for Metro riders who transfer to or from these systems.

Staff is also scoping replacement of aging information systems that deliver real-time information, in particular the Advanced Transportation Management System (ATMS) for buses, and a similar communication system for trains. Note that these replacements are currently unfunded.

While Metro works to improve the quality of real time predictions, it should be noted that it's not always possible to predict arrival times accurately due to sudden changes in traffic, accidents, detours, and other unexpected factors.

Call-Out Box: Wi-Fi and Cellular Service

Wi-Fi and cellular services enable customers to get work done while riding, use social media, play games, check to see when a connecting bus or train is coming, and text/call loved ones in the event of an emergency. Metro recently introduced Wi-Fi on buses to provide customers with internet access, to improve security by linking cameras to Metro Operations, and to improve vehicle location information to make predicted arrival times more accurate. Wi-Fi also benefits lower-income people who have smartphones but can't afford unlimited data.

Metro Rail customers now have improved cellular service on the subway, including the B (Red) and D (Purple) Lines for almost all major carriers.

For both Wi-Fi and cellular, it is important that Metro ITS continue to monitor service to ensure there is good availability and adequate bandwidth for customer use. This will also be monitored through annual Customer Experience surveys.

Courtesy of Big Blue Bus, Santa Monica, CA

Dissemination of Real-time-Time Information

As real time information and predictions improve, we want it to be readily available to Metro riders. Digital displays have been installed at over 300 high volume bus stops to show real-time arrival predictions. These are especially helpful in areas where customers may not have smartphones. They are also especially valuable at transfer stations and bus stops with a high volume of transfer activity.

Metro wants to get real time information displays to as many bus stops as possible, therefore Metro is considering lower cost options such as "e-paper" displays that are powered by solar panels.

Another way for riders to obtain real-time arrival predictions is by finding the bus stop ID number at their stop and calling 511. Metro Stops and Zones, Intelligent Transportation Systems (RIITS), and 511 are working together to develop a consistent regional system for this, including accommodations for people who are blind or sight impaired.

Another way to disseminate real-time information is through smartphone apps. Metro recently formed a partnership with a third-party, five-star app (Transit), discarding the previous two-star Metro app. This provides a more user-friendly interface to real-time information and can potentially incorporate rider reports of delays to make predictions more accurate.

On the train side, arrival information has been incorporated for end-of-line train stations, which was missing previously.

None of these methods for disseminating real-time information, however, solve the accuracy problem. It is important to tackle that first.

Recommendations:

1. By February 1, 2021, the Real-time Information Team to develop a charter and clearly identify scope of work, schedule, budget, and roles and responsibilities to provide high quality real time information and predictions to Metro riders.

2. By February 1, 2021, the Real-time Information Team to develop a comprehensive set of metrics for monitoring major points of failure (including hardware, software, communication, and operating procedure issues), a plan for monitoring the metrics, and a procedure for escalating issues that cannot be quickly solved by the team members.

3. By March 1, 2021, Metro ITS to release a real-time vehicle position Application Programming Interface (API) feed compliant with the GTFS RT standard to help third-party apps and websites accurately predict Metro bus and train arrivals.

4. By June 30, 2021, to address operational changes that can occur such as detours and missed runs, the Real-time Information Team to work with Operations to develop required internal

work flows and release a more accurate alerts API feed compliant with the GTFS RT standard, and incorporate delay advisories prominently on the Metro website, apps, and real-time information digital displays.

Transport For London e-Paper sign. Photo Credit TBD.

5.   By June 30, 2021, to improve dissemination of real time information, OEI, Countywide Planning, and Stops and Zones to test lower cost "e-paper" displays operated by solar panels, similar to what is currently being tested in London and Big Blue Bus in Santa Monica.

6.   By June 30, 2021, Marketing and Research to study technology habits of Metro riders and evaluate options to disseminate real-time information, including to riders without smartphones and people with disabilities.

Call-Out Box: Real-Time Rider Communication and Engagement

Metro's Digital Services team developed a proposal for a simple real-time, automated system to communicate with riders via the digital channels of their choice. Information would be customized to each rider based on the routes and times they ride, and through whatever channel they use: *metro.net*, third-party apps like Google Maps and *Transit*, SMS text alerts, social media, and smartphone notifications. This will require creating a customer relationship management (CRM) platform and User Experience (UX) research to meet customer needs. The CRM platform would also invite riders to rate their customer experience, report issues through the TransitWatch app and Customer Care, provide input on Metro projects and initiatives, and receive rewards that incentivize ridership and engagement. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for a cost estimate.

5.03 Metro Bus frequency

Metro riders want to get where they are going quickly. That requires frequent service to keep wait times short, and fast service to keep travel times short. This chapter addresses frequency and wait time, while a following chapter addresses vehicle speed and travel time.

Frequencies minimize waiting, which research shows is the most disliked part of the transit journey. And as we all know, there is a huge difference between missing a bus that comes every 20 minutes and missing a bus that comes every 5 minutes. Here is what Metro customers say about frequency of service:

- ‹ "The same schedule should be in place on most routes all 7 days of the week and the same frequency should be kept as well… I would like to go out to concerts (when they resume) and I can get to them, no problem, but getting home before the buses slow way down or stop is sketchy." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)
- ‹ "If you take a bus you cannot do it on the spot, you cannot just go there and wait because you don't know how long you will have to wait." (Customer Satisfaction Chinese Language Focus Group, 2017)
- ‹ "I've noticed that you guys have more buses running with their tourist but not where their citizens are!! Improve the buses in low-income areas there's not enough buses running frequently!!" (COVID-19 Survey Comment)
- ‹ "The busses do not run often enough after 7pm and this makes it hard to get home from work." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)

- ‹ "Another day that this extremely busy bus line takes over 20 minutes to come during rush hour… The frequency of these buses urgently needs to increase during rush hour…" (Complaint to Customer Relations)
- ‹ "There was problem with the Red Line and it was backed up but the crowds are a daily issue. People push to fit on the buses. They need to run more frequently during peak hours." (complaint to Customer Relations)

Metro has a NextGen Bus Plan that will eventually establish a core system of frequent bus and train routes with headways of 10 minutes or better, covering 46 weekday lines (compared to 16 previously). And it will provide demand-responsive Microtransit services in other areas. Note that a "headway" is the amount of time between scheduled buses, so the lower the better. The bus improvements will dramatically increase the number of people within walking distance of the frequent network, from 900,000 residents to nearly three million. And the core bus network will lower wait times for midday, evening, and weekend riders. These improvements are important for the 70% of Metro rides typically taken by bus, and the goal is to eventually provide at least 80% of bus riders with headways of 10 minutes or less.

The COVID-19 pandemic, however, dramatically impacted Metro revenue and ridership, and the resulting fiscal challenge has delayed the pace of service improvements. Metro sees NextGen as a major priority, however, and intends to phase-in the Plan as ridership and revenue rebound after the pandemic. Moreover, NextGen will be especially needed to meet demand if Metro introduces fareless (free fare) service.

Costs and potential phasing for NextGen service improvements are outlined in this table:

NextGen Incremental Annual Operating Cost

Scenario	Maximum Revenue Service Hours (million RSH)	Incremental Annual Funding Needed
Base FY21	5.6	n/a
FY22	6.5	$131,148,000
FY23 (NextGen Scenarios A/B)	7.1	$ 87,432,000
TBD (NextGen Scenario C)	9.4	$335,156,000

NextGen improvements are ready to go when the economy rebounds and/or funding become available, and Metro bus riders eagerly await them.

Recommendation:
1. By April 1, 2021, as part of the FY22 budget development, Metro Operations and OMB to update the rollout schedule for the NextGen phases based on ridership and revenue trends.

5.04 Bus stops

Bus stops are a gateway into the Metro system. Bus riders want to feel safe, secure, and comfortable while waiting for the bus. Unfortunately, not all bus stops in Metro's service areas have basic features customers need. Of the 13,802 bus stops served by Metro, only 24% have a transit shelter, 46% have seating, and 56% have streetlamps within 50 feet. Just 2% have real-time information displays. And more than half of bus stop areas lack curb ramps or other important provisions for people with disabilities.

The lack of these essential features creates an uninviting waiting experience. Customers also mention concerns about their safety, due to fear of crime, unsafe intersection crossings when accessing the bus stop, or inadequate lighting that can make waiting feel unsafe at night.

- "Here, far west in the San Fernando Valley, we need more frequent buses and we most especially need more bus benches and coverings, as well as trash cans at the bus stops." (COVID-19 Survey Comments)
- "Shade/charging stations in bus stops." (COVID-19 Survey Comments)
- "There is a long wait time [at night] and I don't want to wait at the bus stop for a long time. So, as long as you are on the bus you are okay. But when you are at the bus stop waiting. I feel that is dangerous." (Customer Satisfaction Korean Language Focus Group, 2017)
- "You have people sitting on the steps in the shadows (facing the stop) doing their drugs, smoking their pot and conducting their drug deals while they wait for the bus." (Complaint to Customer Relations)
- "No safe space to sit so you are forced to share cigarette smoke with employees from the building." (Complaint to Customer Relations)
- "This senior citizen lady had to stand there … waiting 23 minutes in the hot sun with no seats or benches." (Complaint to Customer Relations)

Metro does not have direct control over most bus stops in its service area, rather, 63 different jurisdictions own them. Metro installs and maintains bus stop signs and posts, and a multitude of public agencies may or may not provide bus shelters, benches, trash receptacles, maintenance, and other amenities. Of course, customers do not care who owns bus stops, nor should they have to be concerned with jurisdictional distinctions. This is the essence of good customer experience - the system should work well together and jurisdictional structure should be invisible to the customer. While this reality makes it challenging for Metro to shape customer experience at bus stops, we can work with the cities we serve to make improvements for Metro bus riders.

Prioritizing improvements

Fortunately, 8% of bus stops in Metro's service area serve 61% of all bus riders. We want to focus on these high-volume bus stops, as well as bus stops selected based on wait times, urban heat, high collision areas, and the presence of Equity Focus Communities, schools, senior centers and other public facilities.

Over the past few years Metro has refined its design standards for bus stops. Metro's Transfers Design Guide establishes bus stop design guidance, as seen in the figure below. Metro works with cities to incorporate this into planning and construction, and Metro offers training for staff and contractors to implement bus stop design best practices.
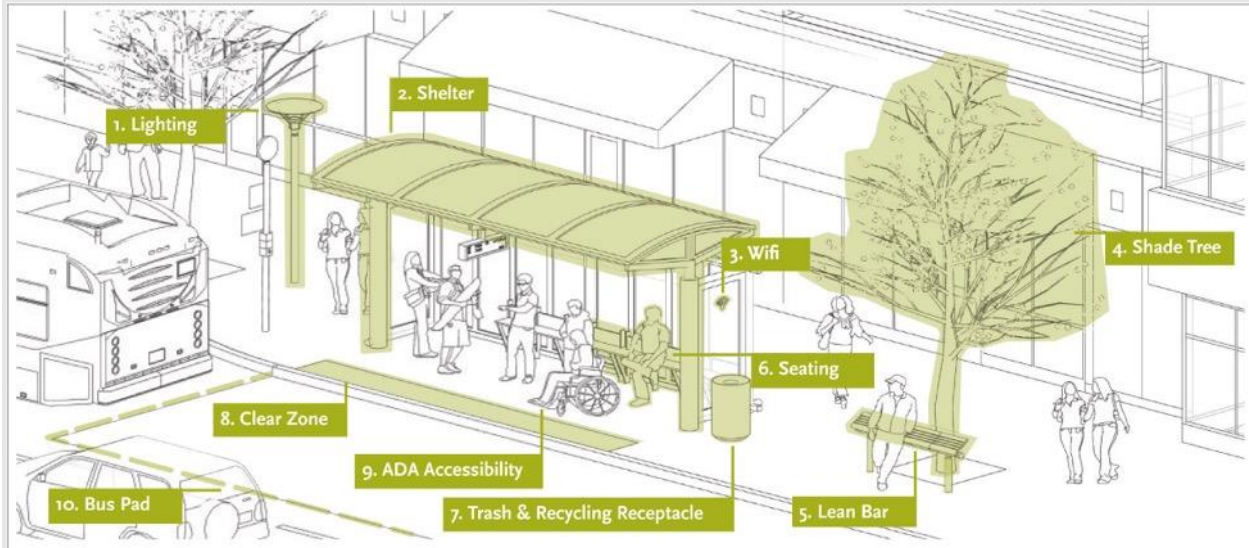

Figure: Recommended features of a bus stop or station from Metro's 2018 Transfers Design Guide

Funded through Measure M, Metro is also planning several major Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects. In preparation for these projects, Metro is preparing a Bus Rapid Transit Vision and Principles Study to establish design guidelines for BRT stations.

Through the Better Bus Initiative, Metro is working across jurisdictions to evaluate ways to finance, construct, and maintain bus stops that provide a high-quality customer experience.

The Better Bus Stops working group is focusing on the following basic needs of riders at bus stops:

- ‹ Shelter and/or shade protection
- ‹ ADA accessibility
- ‹ Safe pedestrian crossing
- ‹ Lighting
- ‹ Seating and/or leaning
- ‹ Real-time and schedule information
- ‹ Well-maintained and clean stops

Better Bus brings together many Metro departments, including Countywide Planning, Service Planning and Scheduling, Systemwide Design, Arts & Design, Stops and Zones, the Office of Civil Rights & Inclusion, Environmental Compliance and Sustainability (ECSD), and the Office of Extraordinary Innovation to synchronize efforts to make these improvements.

Shelters and/or shade protection

Bus shelters are essential. Not only do they protect customers from the elements, but they also make bus stops more visible, provide seating and real-time information, and reduce perceived wait times. There are also alternative shelter designs or shade structures for narrow sidewalks where standard shelters do not fit. Additionally, planting trees near bus stops can provide shade.

Metro staff is mapping out a strategy to provide at least 60% of bus stops within Metro's service area with a shelter or shade protection by 2025. This effort requires:

- Building support to fund bus stop improvements through billboard advertising revenue, grants, or other funding opportunities
- Working collaboratively to incentivize cities to prioritize funding for bus stop improvements
- Helping cities incorporate best practices for street furniture advertising contracts, including blanket permitting to expedite bus shelter installation

The Better Bus Stops working group is working with the City of LA's Bureau of Street Services, called StreetsLA, to prioritize bus shelter locations in their upcoming advertising contract. Metro is also looking for opportunities elsewhere in its service area, with a focus on high-heat locations.

ADA accessibility and safe pedestrian crossing

Metro funds local jurisdictions across LA County, through local return of tax dollars, to repair sidewalks, enhance crosswalk safety with more visible striping, and install pedestrian signals. In addition, the City of LA has a 30-year $1.4 billion program called Safe Sidewalks LA to repair sidewalks and improve accessibility. Although bus stops are not a focus of Safe Sidewalks LA, sidewalks and curb ramps at bus stops adjacent to city facilities such as libraries, parks, and social services are being repaired. Additionally, Vision Zero and the Complete Streets teams at the City of LA are working with Safe Sidewalks LA to restripe crosswalks.

Also, as part of NextGen stop consolidation to reduce travel times, Metro's Stops and Zones team along with municipal partners will remove some stops that lack basic amenities or are not ADA accessible. Accessibility is an important consideration in the stop consolidation plan.

Lighting

Across Metro's service area, there are only a handful of bus stops with dedicated, pedestrian lighting (59 bus stops). Metro and the City of LA are working to install pedestrian lighting at bus stops that are not well lit, in areas of higher crime, and where there are high numbers of night-time riders.

Figure 1: Pedestrian lighting at Inglewood and Venice Boulevard in Los Angeles, Bureau of Streets and Lighting

A $750,000 bus stop lighting project was recently completed by ECSD with support from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Twenty-one (21) bus stops were prioritized from a list developed by Metro Service Planning. The City of LA subsequently designed, procured, installed, and will maintain streetlights at these bus stops:

Table 1: Pedestrian Lighting Locations in the City of Los Angeles funded through ECSD

Street Location	Nearest Cross Street
York Blvd	Avenue 49
San Fernando Rd	Eagle Rock Blvd
Vermont Avenue	Melrose Avenue
Vermont Avenue	4th St
Cesar Chavez Avenue	Vignes St
Central Avenue	6th S
Adams Blvd	Broadway
38th St	Broadway
Slauson Avenue	2nd Avenue
Slauson Avenue	Van Ness Avenue
Florence Avenue	Avalon Blvd
Vermont Avenue	76th St
Vermont Avenue	94th St
O Farrell St	Beacon St
Century Blvd	La Cienega Blvd
Sherman Way	Topanga Canyon Blvd

Based on recommendations from Metro's Women & Girls Governing Council (WGGC), staff prioritized an additional 13 stops based on weekday boardings and crime rate, and are working with the City of LA's Bureau of Street Lighting (BSL) and StreetsLA to consider lighting for these locations. BSL allocates funding for pedestrian lighting at 30 bus stops a year within the City of Los Angeles. Metro staff continue to work to identify funding for bus stop lighting improvements in other parts of its service area.

13 Candidate Metro Stops for Additional Lighting within the City of Los Angeles
(Ranked by average weekday boardings)

Stop Name	Daily Boardings
Vermont/Vernon	686
Vermont/Martin Luther King Jr	672
Crenshaw/Martin Luther King Jr	578
Crenshaw/Slauson	510
Crenshaw/Florence	259
Western/Slauson	274
Gage/Broadway	105
Venice/Western	628
Western/Vernon	564
Venice/Cadillac	430
Van Nuys/Sherman Way	332
Vernon/Western	170
Ventura/Van Nuys	112

The City of LA recently completed its streetlight competition, and the winning design includes an optional secondary light over the sidewalk for pedestrians. The Better Bus Stop working group is working to assess opportunities to deploy these new streetlamps near bus stops in high need areas.

Figure 2A rendering of Project Room's entry in L.A.'s streetlight competition: a design that provides one light over the street and a second over the sidewalk. (Courtesy Project Room, LA)

Seating and/or leaning

Just over half of bus stops served by Metro do not have seating. For customers with long waits, people with disabilities, and elderly riders, not having seating at a stop can cause major discomfort. Many bus stops do not have enough sidewalk space for a bench. Metro's Better Bus Stop working group is planning to test low-cost solutions, possibly like the image below, to provide seating at more stops, and will solicit rider feedback.

Simme seats used by Skagit Transit

Schedule information

In addition to the recommendations in the Real-time information section of this Plan, Metro is exploring improvements to static schedule information at bus stops. As a part of the NextGen service change scheduled for June 2021, the Better Bus Stops working group is considering modifications to bus signs to improve the information we provide to bus riders (see Figure X for an example from Minnesota).

Routing and service frequency information on screens and in static signage at Chavez Pavilion, Los Angeles, Union Station.

Well-maintained and clean bus stops

Key cleanliness and maintenance issues that Metro is seeking to address include:
‹ Trash and debris due to a lack of trash receptacles, or overflowing and unmaintained receptacles
‹ Unsanitary conditions affecting health and safety concerns (e.g. discarded food, rummaged garbage cans, drug paraphernalia, human and animal waste)
‹ Bus stop areas and seating occupied by non-transit activities (e.g. individuals sleeping or lounging on benches or on sidewalks, encampments of people experiencing homelessness)

‹ Graffiti and damage to bus stop furniture or infrastructure
‹ A lack of coordination for bus stop condition reporting and response across Metro and local jurisdictions

Across Metro's service area, local jurisdictions are largely responsible for keeping bus stops clean and maintaining the shelter, seating, and trash receptacle. Metro Stops and Zones responds to calls in the City of LA, along with occasional calls from across the County, to power wash bus stops that are health or safety hazards.

The Better Bus Stops working group is looking into additional ways to improve bus stop cleanliness. Metro's Integrated Station Design Solutions (ISDS) working group has a new design for station trash receptacles that are more maintainable, secure, and attractive. Metro is also exploring an Adopt-a-Stop program. These programs have been used by cities and transit agencies across the US to help keep bus stops clean. In an Adopt-a-Stop program, a local business or community group could pay to sponsor the stop, pick up litter, and report graffiti and other issues to the transit agency or local jurisdiction. The Better Bus Stops working group, in consultation with Customer Care and Stops and Zones, is also considering a pilot program to streamline the process for customers and local jurisdictions to report bus stop issues and get them addressed quickly.

Pilot Tests

The Better Bus Stops working group, in conjunction with Metro's OEI and Stops & Zones, plan to test low-cost bus stop improvements and solicit input from bus riders and the general public.

Pilot proposals include:
‹ An on-post bus seat
‹ A push-button solar light. These solar lights have a button-activated flashing light to alert bus operators that a passenger is waiting, thereby reducing pass-ups at night
‹ A solar-powered fan

Courtesy of Orange County Transit Authority (OCTA)

Other improvements

Additional investments in bus stops include the new Cesar E. Chavez Avenue Bus Stop Improvements and the Patsaouras Plaza Busway, both funded through a federal grant. The Cesar E. Chavez Avenue Bus Stop Improvements include a new transit pavilion, bicycle amenities and new bus shelters. The Patsaouras Plaza Busway will provide a new station for the Metro J (Silver) Line and other buses on the El Monte Busway, and provides a platform and a pedestrian bridge (designed through architect and artist collaboration) to help riders access Union Station. Additionally, the project will enhance security at the plaza with improved lighting and a closed-circuit TV system (CCTV).

New Patsaouras Plaza Busway, Union Station, Los Angeles

Recommendations

1. By March 1, 2021, the Better Bus Stop working group to finalize a system for prioritizing which bus stops receive amenities first, based on Equity Focus Communities, weekday bus boardings, wait time, urban heat, high collision areas, and the presence of schools, senior centers and other public facilities. The criteria will be developed in partnership with cities in the Metro service area.

2. By April 1, 2021, the Better Bus Stop working group, in consultation with subregional stakeholders, to recommend bus stop improvements for potential inclusion in local return project plans and uses.

3. By April 1, 2021, Metro Real Estate to finalize an agreement to dedicate a portion of possible new digital billboard revenue to fund bus stop improvements.

4. By June 30, 2021, Metro's OEI, Countywide Planning, Service Planning, and Office of Management and Budget to work with external fund sources, including local jurisdiction street furniture/advertising contracts, to develop a funding plan to provide seating and shade for at least 60% of Metro bus stops, along with low-cost solar lighting, new bus signs, real-time information, and low-cost seating.

5. By Dec 31, 2021, Stops and Zones and Community Relations to work with municipalities to test inviting neighborhoods and businesses to adopt bus stops, as done in other cities.

6. By Dec 31, 2021, the Better Bus Stops working group, Stops and Zones, Customer Relations, and Community Relations to work with the City of LA and at least two other cities in the Metro service area to formalize policies and procedures to keep bus stop areas clean, to address homelessness, and to develop a system to invite bus riders to report bus stop issues.

5.05 Ease of payment

Purchasing your Metro fare should be easy – whether you're a daily local rider or a first-time visitor to LA County, this first step in the customer journey can set the tone for the complete experience. When beginning travel on Metro, we want to ensure this first impression is a good one.

Important note: Metro is currently evaluating fareless (free fare) transit, which could make the ease of fare payment (and the recommendations in this section) a moot issue.

Customers tell Metro they want more convenient options to pay fares.

‹ "Make it easier for contactless payment by phone or TAP cards" (COVID-19 Survey Comment)
‹ "Payment via an app on a smartphone should be a prime goal…" (COVID-19 Survey Comment)

Previous complaints included:
‹ Difficulties loading TAP cards at Ticket Vending Machines
‹ The inability to purchase TAP at bus stops
‹ The length of time it takes for fare to be loaded to TAP cards when purchasing online,
‹ The lack of a mobile app for fare payment,
‹ Too many fare types to choose from
‹ Hard to apply for LIFE low-income discounts; and
‹ Metro monthly pass not synchronized with Bike Share

Fortunately, Metro is working to address many of these issues. Improvements include:

TAP Mobile App: The TAP program brings an innovative "first" for fare payment with the September 2020 launch of the TAP mobile app. This new technology gives customers a contactless way to pay for transit using an iPhone (8 and above, iOS 13.6 and above) or Apple Watch (Series 3 and above, watch OS 6.2.8). The TAP app can also be used to buy fare for 25 additional TAP transit systems, manage TAP accounts including Reduced Fare and LIFE discounts, and plan trips using Trip Tools. The TAP app for Android will be available this year.

‹ **TAP automated transfers:** New automated transfers replaced a manual process that required bus operators to select the correct transfer, and collect the full fare on the first leg of a trip.
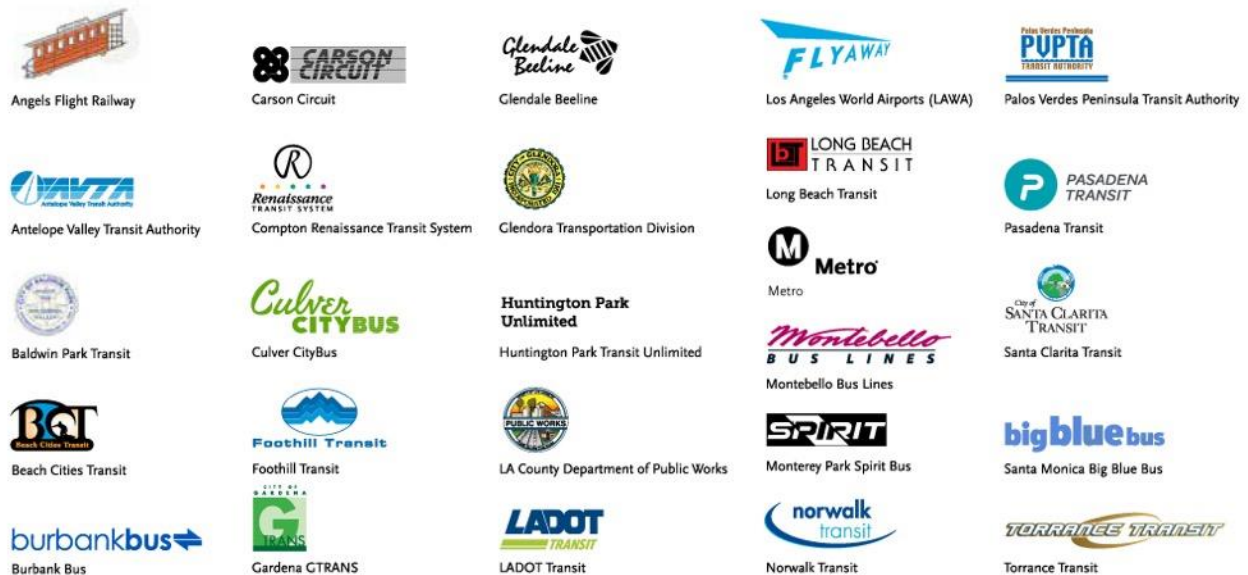
‹ **TAP Ticket Vending Machines (TVM's):** Metro's TAP department redesigned TVM screens for easier navigation, and designed new help screens and audio capabilities for people with sight impairments. Note: for the 2021 CX Plan, Metro will analyze feedback from customers regarding ease of fare payment to assess whether there are remaining issues to be resolved.

‹ **Bus station TVM's:** TVMs are currently available at all Metro G Line (Orange) BRT stations, at eight key stations along the J Line (Silver) BRT and at the Union Station Patsaouras Bus Plaza. A TVM will be added to the new Silver Line Union Station Patsaouras Bus Plaza, as well as at the new Cesar Chavez Transit Pavilion. Metro has worked with regional partners to expand TVMs to five additional locations: Norwalk Transit Center, Long Beach Transit Center, South Bay Regional Intermodal Transit Center (Redondo Beach), Torrance South Bay Regional Intermodal Transit Center and Culver City Transit Center.

‹ **Upgraded Fareboxes:** Upgraded bus fareboxes have been installed so now passes and stored value purchased online will load onto TAP cards more immediately. From a consumer perspective, loaded value should be available to use on your TAP card the moment you purchase it. The lag time has been reduced from up to 48 hours to just 30 minutes, and the current goal is to reduce it to no more than 10 minutes. These are good steps, but still fall short of the instant loading that consumers expect.

‹ **TAP and Stored Value Sales on Board Buses:** Customers can now purchase TAP cards and load stored value on board all Metro buses and seven other municipal bus operators. These loads happen instantly.

‹ **One Million TAP Card Distribution:** To get the benefits of TAP in the hands of as many Metro customers as possible, the Metro Board of Directors authorized the distribution of one million free TAP cards. Consistent with Metro's focus on equity, distribution was focused on areas with disadvantaged populations, including through social service agencies.

‹ **TAP Third-party Vendor Network:** To make TAP readily available in neighborhoods throughout the LA area, TAP increased its third-party vendor network to 470 locations, and in 2019 added 1,000 more locations through a partnership with Walgreens Pharmacy and 7-11.

‹ **TAP Website:** Our independent review of the TAP website reveals that it is easy to use, setting a high bar for other Metro websites, vending machines, and apps to achieve the same level.

‹ **Bike Share and Metro Monthly Pass:** Currently, Metro Monthly Pass customers are unable to use their monthly pass as fare payment for Metro Bike Share due to incompatibility with the current reader types. TAP is currently working with Metro Planning to coordinate with the next Bike Share contract.

‹ **Comprehensive Pricing Study**: Metro is currently doing a comprehensive review of fees and fares, and one of the top objectives is to simplify fares to improve the customer experience.

‹ **Fare-capping:** TAP is currently exploring a fare-capping feature to allow customers to pay as they go for rides on Metro, until the cumulative fare deductions reach the pass cost for the incremental travel period (end of the day, end of the week, end of the month), after which rides would be free for the remainder of the month (or daily/weekly pass period).

The TAP mobile app was developed to simplify fare purchase - no more stopping at TVMs or interaction with the bus operator. Many riders do not have a smartphone, however, or have an older model that cannot be used for fare payment. And getting riders to transition from cash payments to TAP remains an issue, with 30-40% of bus riders not using TAP. These customers are unable to enjoy free and seamless Metro transfers on second boardings, easy TAP payment for Metro Bike Share, and balance protection if a card is lost. The distribution of one million TAP cards was a good first step in addressing the issue, but it is a significant equity issue and work remains to be done.

Also, with more than half of Metro riders meeting the low-income threshold, reduced fare programs such as LIFE must continue to eliminate barriers to reduced fare programs. The new LIFE program started in July 2019 with approximately 30,000 customers and since then, the program has grown to 77,000 users. This is swift growth but there is still room to expand. The improved, electronic process for renewing LIFE discounts, implemented due to the pandemic, is also a good step forward, but more needs to be done to make LIFE as accessible as possible to those who would benefit from it.

The payment industry will continue to evolve, and it's important for Metro to map a flexible approach that allows the agency to stay with the times. This underscores the importance of releasing open API's for payment so that Metro payment is available through a range of apps and devices, and working with APTA and other industry stakeholders to adopt common technology standards. This will also help LA prepare to welcome people from around the world to the 2028 Olympic games. Whether a visitor uses Google Maps, a shared ride app, a short-term home rental website, an event ticketing app, or an airfare search engine, Metro transit information and payment should be ubiquitous and readily available.

Recommendations

1. By June 30, 2021 TAP to seek authorization to distribute at least 100,000 additional free cards to areas with low TAP use, and consider new incentives to use TAP instead of cash. Additionally, it is recommended that Metro have ambassadors with iPads assist riders in low TAP use areas with registering their TAP cards so that users enjoy balance protection, gain a sense of ownership of their TAP card, and get familiar with the convenient *taptogo.net* website.

2. By January 31, 2021, as part of the midyear budget process, OMB to revisit local programming budget limits that discourage LIFE program growth.

3. By March 1, 2021, OEI to organize focus groups or phone interviews with cash-paying and non-smartphone transit riders to better assess their needs and inform the LIFE discount campaign.

4. By April 1, 2021, LIFE program to work with Metro Marketing, Customer Care, and municipal transit agencies and other TAP partners to review procedures and eligibility requirements, such as a government issued photo ID requirement, and further improve the ease of applying. This review should also evaluate ways to enable quick third-party validation of eligibility based on eligibility for other government aid programs.

5. By June 30, 2021, Metro Marketing to launch a new campaign to publicize LIFE discounts and the easier application process.

6. By June 30, 2021, TAP to prepare a strategy and expedited schedule to power third-party payment.

Again, it should be noted that Metro is currently considering fareless transit, which could make the ease of fare payment (and the recommendations in this section) moot. An initial report is scheduled to be completed in December 2020.

Metro riders also want faster travel times, especially for the bus.

Here are some recent comments from Metro customers about vehicle speed:

‹ "I don't really take the bus because there are too many connections to where I want to go, and so right now Uber is just much easier." (2017 Customer Satisfaction Japanese Language Focus Groups)
‹ "This is probably the 5th time I've been forced to call Uber because the line 230 is hardly even sticking to any schedule on the Metro application or Google or any other app… I'm honestly completely flabbergasted as to how unbelievable poorly Metro is running…" (complaint to Customer Relations)

Some of these issues occurred because the COVID-19 pandemic reduced traffic congestion, and bus operators had to slow down to avoid getting ahead of their schedule. Metro Operations staff subsequently adjusted schedules to reflect current traffic conditions.

More broadly, though, when the 2017 OEI survey asked lapsed riders why they no longer ride, 64% said buses take too long and 25% said rail takes too long (2018 Metro Marketing Brand Tracker Survey).

In fact, while Metro's Vision 2028 Plan set a goal to increase bus speeds by 30% in the future, bus speeds have declined by 12.5% over the last 25 years due to traffic and parking congestion, and more recently due to Uber and Lyft pickups and drop-offs, and e-commerce delivery vehicles.

Bus speeds decreased from 2008 to 2019.
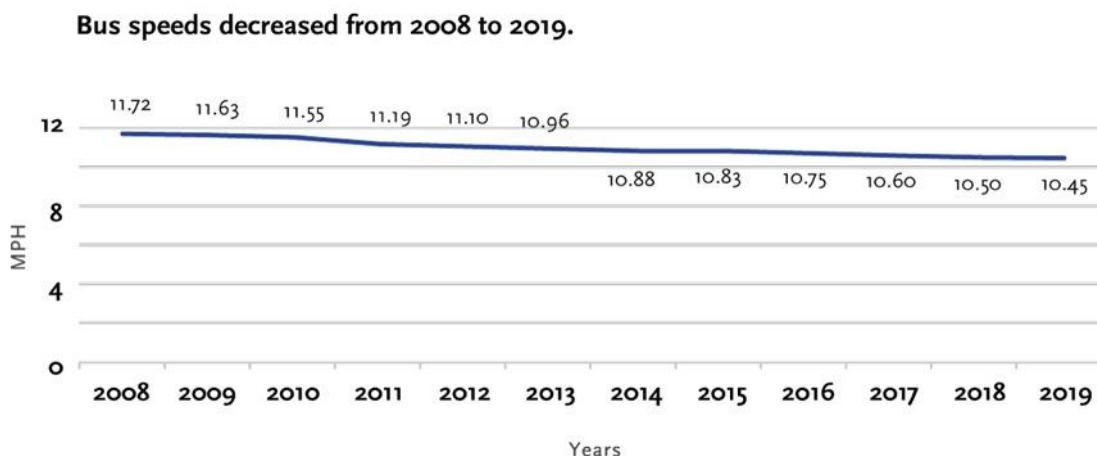
Fortunately, bus-only lanes can speed up service, and let bus riders zoom past traffic congestion. For example, the Flower Street bus-only lane improved speeds up to 30% during the PM peak.

Segment of Flower St Bus Lane

Metro recently began to utilize new bus-only lanes on Flower, 5th and 6th streets in Downtown LA, and will be working on more. Metro has been collaborating with the City of LA, LADOT and StreetsLA to expedite bus-only lanes (and bike lanes), reflecting a mindset among City and Metro staff that prioritizes the interests of bus riders, many from disadvantaged communities.

Metro Rider Profile

Gender, race, ethnicity

53% Women

66% Latinx

15% African-American

32% Limited English Proficiency

Resources

81% Have no cars

45% Have no smartphones

Source: Fall 2019 On-Board Survey

Financial status

$17,975 Median annual income

41% Rely on discounted fares

30% Pay with cash

Nearly 30,000 Metro weekday riders will benefit from the 5th and 6th Street improvements, plus riders on buses operated by Torrance Transit, LADOT, Antelope Valley Transit and Montebello Bus Lines.

Even with recent progress on bus-only lanes, there are a range of challenges and constraints that impact future progress. These include budget constraints, street geometry limitations, existing traffic congestion, and political and community support for the improvements. Additional factors include traffic enforcement to keep bus-only lanes clear, stop locations and spacing, bus zone design, transit signal priority, all--door boarding, and fare payment (which increases boarding times).

Metro is working with LADOT to expand Transit Priority Signaling (TPS) from just Metro Rapid buses currently to all Metro buses in the future. TPS extends green lights to prioritize bus service.

Bus lane enforcement is also crucial to support faster bus speeds. Most bus lanes are passively enforced through roadway marking and signage. As a result, most of the lanes in LA County have high vehicle intrusion rates. In some cases, such as the mixed-use bus lane on Wilshire Boulevard, there is little active enforcement by police or parking officials, and a study showed lane intrusions at a rate of one every four minutes during the bus lane operating hours. By comparison, Metro, in partnership with the LADOT, piloted a bus lane in 2019 in Downtown Los Angeles on Flower Street with dedicated police enforcement, which helped the project dramatically improve bus speeds.

Automated camera enforcement can help keep bus-only lanes clear. Metro's OEI worked with CarmaCam in 2019 to test use of bus-mounted cameras, which can be used to capture images of intrusion into the bus lane and issue warnings or citations, similar to a successful program in San Francisco. In 2021, Metro plans to consider seeking legislation to authorize camera enforcement, and funding to implement it in key corridors, in partnership with the City of LA and other communities that will benefit from bus-only lanes.

Another way to increase speed is through all-door boarding (ADB), which allows riders to board at any door. Metro Rail and the G Line (Orange) Bus Rapid Transit have ADB, with riders loading their TAP cards before they board and tapping on validators upon entering the buses. The J Line (Silver), Line 720 (Wilshire) and Line 754 (Vermont) use bus mobile validators (BMV) mounted near each door to allow customers to board and pay. Metro is exploring strategies to expand ADB to additional routes. Of course, the fareless programs being considered by Metro could make ADB universal.

Rendering courtesy of Mott MacDonald/Gannett Fleming

Metro is doing even more to increase speeds on the G Line. Improvements through 2025 will include 35 gated street crossings along the route, and grade separation at Van Nuys Blvd and Sepulveda. With these improvements, G Line service is expected to be 29% faster, reducing end-to-end travel times from 53-55 minutes to just 38 minutes.

Also Metro's Corporate Safety is working with Service Planning and Bus Operations (Divisions 8 and 15) to develop speed advisory software that analyzes LADOT street signal and bus movement data to suggest an optimal speed to Operators for smoother operations and fewer red lights. This project was first submitted by two Metro employees (Tony Tiritilli and Leonid Bukhin) as an internal Unsolicited Proposal. Tablets have been installed on a few test buses and testing will begin soon.

And additional higher-speed Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lines are being planned in the North San Fernando Valley, NoHo to Pasadena, and Vermont Ave transit corridors (note: Vermont is also being studied as a potential rail alignment).

Metro is also working to increase train speeds. Increased rail signal priority on the A Line (Blue) service shaved seven minutes roundtrip in Long Beach. And Metro is partnering with LADOT to improve rail signal priority for nine intersections along the E Line (Expo). These projects help trains traverse intersections without stopping for red lights.

Longer term, Metro is conducting a design review of the light rail network to identify additional segments where travel speeds could be safely increased. This study will be completed by March 2022.

Recommendations:

1. By February 1, 2021, the Better Bus team in conjunction with the City of LA to finalize the next round of bus-only lane improvements to continue the momentum from successes in 2020.

5.07 Crowding

In normal times, riders want a seated ride, adequate elbow room, and clear aisles to get on and off easily. During a pandemic, they also want safe social distancing, and these comments reflect that sentiment:

‹ "Good for the most part but believe you could reduce crowding by increasing bus service-buses, opening more seats…" (COVID-19 Survey Comment)

‹ "A lot of passengers on the buses. I think there should be a passenger limit." (COVID-19 Survey Comment, Spanish language)

‹ "Sometimes these buses are so crowded I have a difficult time getting to the exit at my stop." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)

‹ "It would be really nice if you added more buses in the morning. Our bus is always crowded… People were so packed they started yelling at each other and it made me and everyone else uncomfortable like a fight was about to break out." (complaint to Customer Relations)

‹ "The train has been showing up consistently with less cars. The train is usually packed after 4pm so to have less cars just makes for a more uncomfortable ride. There are lots of students or workers with bikes and scooters so the trains are unnecessarily packed and most times with the air conditioning on low so it's hot too… some people get left because there is no room. This has caused arguments that almost turn physical." (complaint to Customer Relations)

‹ "It was about 6:05pm. There was problem with the Redline and it was backed up but the crowds are a daily issue." (complaint to Customer Relations)

As of September, Metro Operations has been running 80% of normal bus service for about 50% of normal ridership, and has been monitoring bus loads on a weekly basis to reallocate service hours where needed. To address COVID-19 concerns, Metro distributed over 50,000 face coverings to riders who didn't have one, driving the percentage of riders with face coverings to 99%, and Metro has tried to ensure that passenger loads do not exceed 75% of seated capacity as a temporary measure, compared to the 130% standard prior to the pandemic. As of September 2020, only 10% of weekday bus runs exceed the 75% standard. Also Operations recently discontinued roping off the front of buses to allow for added capacity for customers to practice physical distancing.

In addition, providing reliable service and keeping the incidence of missed runs under 1%, as recommended in the Metro Bus reliability section of this Plan, will also reduce crowding. This is important because when there is a major delay or missed run, the following bus may have double the load.

Along with the rollout of NextGen, Metro Operations is considering a headway management program for high frequency service (such as NextGen Tier 1 routes). This would draw from experiences at other transit agencies to set up a system whereby supervisors communicate with bus operators to ensure that buses adhere to posted frequency (such as every 10 minutes). This would reduce the bunching of buses, even passenger loads, and allow for reduced travel time when traffic is light.

In the long term, as ridership rebounds, crowding can also be addressed through higher capacity vehicles. Some articulated buses are being phased out due to maintenance demands, but a study is underway to evaluate the pros and cons of double decker buses. On the rail side, Metro is acquiring new open-gangway married pair train cars to open up more room for customers.

In the meantime, the Transit app now provides riders with predicted crowding levels on each run. And Metro is currently working with Transit on enhanced crowding predictions that use real-time crowd-sourced data. This work is especially important for customers concerned about having adequate social distancing.

One other crowding issue is how to best accommodate luggage, strollers and other items on Metro vehicles. As new vehicles are ordered, Metro will continue to evaluate seat layouts to strike the optimal balance between seating and room for personal items, while also providing accessibility for riders with disabilities. This will be especially important as Metro improves services to airports and intercity rail, and prepares to welcome visitors from around the world for the 2028 Olympics.

Call-Out Box: Courtesy Seating Initiative

Metro's Women & Girls Governing Council (WGGC) recently created Courtesy Seating decals to encourage riders to offer their seat to people with disabilities, pregnant women, and parents with young children. This addresses the needs of women who trip chain to many destinations, often with small children, strollers, and shopping bags. In April 2020, the new "Courtesy Seating" decals were posted in all Metro buses.

Going forward, WGGC plans to extend this campaign to train cars, augment it with audio messages, and include information about the Courtesy campaign in bus operator training.

While budget is required to reduce crowding, it is also a matter of mindset. During the pandemic, it is important for Metro to continue to address social distancing concerns. And after the -pandemic, the mindset throughout the agency should be to do whatever it takes to provide riders with a seated ride

and to minimize the time spent standing on crowded vehicles. This is part of the cultural change discussed in the Future *Customer Experience Plan* section of this report.

Recommendation:

1. While Metro cannot guarantee social distancing on all routes at all times, Metro will introduce a new service configuration in December 2020 that is expected to increase social distancing on targeted bus routes during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is expected to reduce the 10% of bus runs that exceed the temporary average daily load factor measure of 0.75 (a temporary change from the usual 1.3 standard due to COVID-19) to 3% or less based on current ridership levels.

2. By December 1, 2021, Metro Operations to engage a research center or consultant to conduct best practices research on headway management, and consider pilot testing headway management along Tier I service in 2022. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirement for the research phase.

5.08 Personal security

Crime on Metro is down 17% over the last five years, however personal security remains a top rider concern. When riders feel unsafe it can affect how often they ride, when they might ride and whether they ride at all. Some riders fear being mugged, assaulted by unstable individuals, or having their cell phone snatched. Many women are also concerned about being harassed. And some riders fear the police in the wake of recent police shootings around the nation. Here are sample rider comments:

- ‹ "Too much violence on trains and buses to feel safe." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)
- ‹ "Two of Metro's security walked through and did not ask these young men to lower the sound. This is a common problem." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)
- ‹ "More staff/police on train not just at stations gates" (COVID-19 Survey Comment)
- ‹ "I appreciate the presence of security at the train stations. Their presence is especially needed in the early morning and evening hours on platform as well as around the kiosk areas." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)
- ‹ "The Sheriff will discriminate a lot. Say you have three Black guys over here and you got three White guys over here. Immediately, even if they pass the White guys first, they will walk straight past them to go card the Black guy." (Customer Satisfaction Focus Group, 2017)
- ‹ "Your Mall cops may carry guns but they don't have teeth. In fact, these guys make me nervous that they have guns. I can't imagine they have a lot of training." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)
- ‹ "Less cops on the train, all they do is harass people." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)

In the 2019 *Understanding How Women Travel Study*, 60% of female riders said they feel safe riding Metro during the day, but that number plummets to just 20% at night. Safety perceptions for waiting and walking to the stop or station at night were even lower at only 13% feeling safe. Many women interviewed in the study had endured sexual harassment and witnessed violent acts while on transit. In fact, 22% of riders reported experiencing sexual harassment in the past six months.

Women feel that better lighting at stops and along approaches to stations, and the presence of security staff nearby, would help them feel safer.

To address women's concerns, Metro System Security and Law Enforcement (SSLE) is working to respond faster and more sensitively to sexual assault and harassment calls. SSLE staff will participate in sensitivity training, and Metro plans a communications campaign in 2021 to promote a culture of zero tolerance for sexual harassment on the system. Finally, Metro plans to deploy more law enforcement to areas that report higher rates of sexual assault.

Call-Out Box: Metro Zero Tolerance for Sexual Harassment

Metro recently took steps to better support victims of sexual harassment. Victims are encouraged to call 888-950-7233 or text 213-788-2777 to report sexual harassment. This has been supported with a marketing campaign, and Metro's law enforcement partners — which include LAPD, LA County Sheriff's Department, Long Beach Police Department, Metro Transit Security and private security — are responding to sexual harassment incidents as a high priority.
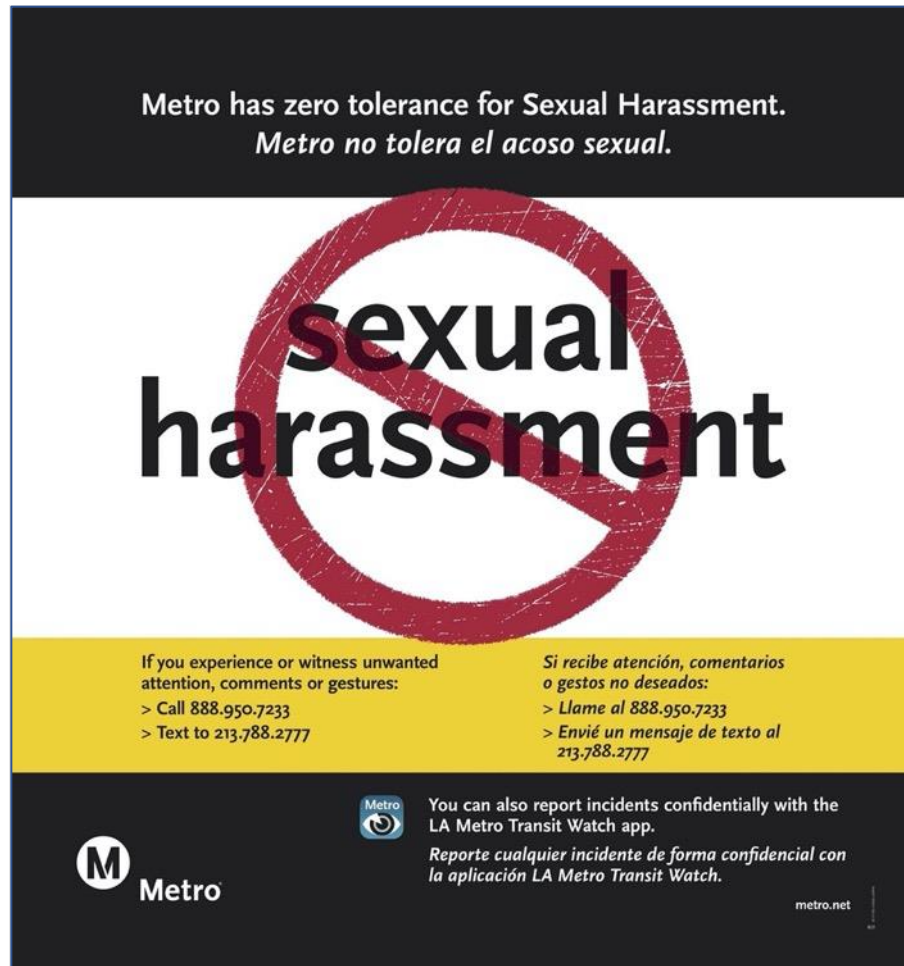
Metro also improves lighting when needed to improve safety. For example, here are photos from recent improvements at the L-Line (Gold) Allen Station.

Allen Station Before

Allen Station After

Another tool to address security concerns is the LA Metro Transit Watch app. The app, which was developed by Metro Information Technology Systems (ITS), enables customers to report security issues by phone, text, by completing a report form, and the option to remain anonymous. The app also has a "Broadcast" feature that can send out security updates when needed. Metro will be publicizing app upgrades in 2021, including a new Spanish-language version and an ability to upload video content.

Recommendation:

1. By February 1, 2021, Metro SSLE and Marketing to jointly set an ambitious goal for Metro Transit Watch market penetration. It is also recommended that, in addition to promoting the Metro Transit Watch app, communication campaigns widely publicize the 213-788-2777 text number (for people with phones that do not accommodate apps). See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirement.

Call-Out Box: WGGC Metro Call Point Initiative

Metro's Women & Girls Governing Council (WGGC) has called for more reliable, highly visible blue light emergency call boxes throughout Metro's system to improve security for customers. Metro SSLE is seeking funding for a phased rollout of this system, which will ultimately cost $6.2 million. The Call Point units will be visible along the B (Red), D (Purple), E (Expo), C (Green) and J (Gold) lines station platforms with bright blue light beacons.

Call-Out Box: Racial Justice

While many riders want more security on the Metro system, many customers are also concerned about racial profiling and officer-involved killings around the country, and Metro's Board of Directors has called for change. The agency will adopt Use of Force policies developed by "Campaign Zero." These include requiring officers to exhaust all other reasonable alternatives before resorting to use of deadly force, restricting strangleholds, and requiring officers to intervene to stop another officer from using excessive force. Metro decriminalized fare evasion in 2018 to reduce youth contact with the justice system and keep kids on a positive path. Metro is also working to implement body worn cameras in consultation with labor representatives, and to train officers in implicit bias, anti-racism, and de-escalation, including use of a simulator to prepare them for real-life situations they might face.

Finally, Metro is fortunate that its contracts with local and regional police departments allows the exclusion of law enforcement officers who fail to act in accordance with Metro's values.

In 2021 Metro will:

‹   Study options to further reform policing,

‹   Evaluate options for unarmed ambassadors to improve Metro security and customer service, and

‹   Shift funding from traditional policing to homelessness outreach and services.

5.09 Homelessness

The homelessness crisis in Los Angeles is among the most severe in the country, and Metro riders tell us that homelessness has a major impact on the customer experience. In a 2018 brand survey, 64% of respondents agreed that there are too many homeless people in the Metro system, and some LA residents avoid Metro entirely due to widespread homelessness on the system.

- ‹ "There has been a large increase in the number of odd characters on the buses and trains, doing inappropriate things, and being smelly. It's sad when they out the people who are basically sleeping on the train to get out of the rain, but it is not fair to the regular riders."(COVID-19 Survey Comment)
- ‹ "I am most worried about the homeless on the trains. The seats are often dirty, I don't want to sit down or I feel gross when I sit. The trains can smell like urine." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)
- ‹ "That the Metro have to stop letting homelessness people get in the bus because they don't have mask and they bring bags with trash and just fighting with the people." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)
- ‹ "The homelessness and transient problem on the trains was really out of control. Sometimes the smells are so bad that people are unable to use that section of the train." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)
- ‹ "Homeless man doing his business (pee and feces) in the elevator. Please stop this from happening." (Complaint to Customer Relations)
- ‹ "The homeless scare, harass or bully the public with disabilities, the rest do not want to be near them because some have mental issues, but the more egregious is health concerns… my concern is that they are a health risk to the general public, because there is no way that you can disinfect, clean or monitor the bus or riders." (Complaint to Customer Relations)
- ‹ "This lady was at the Pershing Square station causing a scene and security got her on the train and moved on to another station to cause another scene…instead of maybe calling someone to help her ??? Just don't pass them off. They are Human Beings." @metrolosangeles (Twitter, Aug 2020)

Metro's Vision 2028 Plan calls for the agency to play a strong leadership role in efforts to address homelessness in LA County.

Metro's objective is two-fold:

1. To help people who are experiencing homelessness, and
2. To curtail behaviors and conditions that adversely affect the health and safety of other riders.

To help people who are experiencing homelessness, Metro has partnered with community-based organizations to engage people on the system who are experiencing homelessness, and try to get them shelter or other services to get them back on their feet. Up to 40 PATH staff (People Assisting the Homeless) in bright blue t-shirts help homeless riders on the train system Monday – Saturday, 3am – 3:30pm. LA DOOR Outreach Teams in grey t-shirts provide additional assistance as follows:

- ‹ Union Station: Wednesdays, 7am
- ‹ Civic & Grand Station: Thursdays, 7am

- Westlake/MacArthur Park Station: Fridays, 7am

The Dream Center Outreach Team in blue t-shirts offers assistance at Union Station every Friday at midnight to people who are experiencing homelessness.

In addition, Metro System Security and Law Enforcement (SSLE) has increased the Homeless Outreach and Proactive Engagement (HOPE) Team from four officers on overtime to eleven full-time officers. These teams work hand-in-hand with PATH. Additionally, as of March 2020, the LAPD Special Problems Unit (SPU), consisting of four sergeants and twelve officers, has been redirected to support 'Operation Shelter the Unsheltered.'

Call-Out Box: LAPD Outreach to individuals experiencing homelessness

Metro connects hundreds of individuals and families experiencing homelessness with the help they need. For example, on March 22, 2020, Officer Perez contacted the LAPD Transit HOPE Team regarding a homeless family living in a vehicle near a Metro bus stop in the Granada Hills area. Concerned for their well-being, Officer Perez referred the family to the Granada Hills Recreation Center shelter for temporary housing to ensure the family had a safe place to sleep during the inclement weather. HOPE Officers along with Department of Mental Health (DMH) Clinician Garcia went to the Granada Hills Recreation Center to meet with the family, but were advised that the family had been relocated to a Motel 6 for the safety of the children.

HOPE Officers and DMH met with the family at the Motel 6. The family consisted of the mother, father, and their three children, one of whom suffers from autism. The mother was concerned because the motel voucher she had received the prior night was good for only one night and they had nowhere else to go. Understanding this urgency, DMH Clinician Garcia worked diligently to contact Los Angeles Family Housing to enter the family into the Coordinated Entry System (CES) database to get them transitional housing. While Clinician Garcia coordinated housing arrangements and mental health appointments for the family, Officers took the family to get gas for their vehicle, as the family needed a reliable means of transportation to relocate to a new shelter. Additionally, Officers purchased the family breakfast since the family had not eaten since the night before. The mother was thankful for the officers' willingness to use their own money to help her family. Los Angeles Family Housing provided the family with a long-term motel voucher to allow the family to get off the street until a permanent apartment became available. Officers discovered that the children needed new clothes and toys, so returned to the motel with food and clothing for the family. Being on the street for several months caused the mother to lose faith, but help from the HOPE team and DMH restored her hope for the future.

SSLE also secured support from the LA County Sheriff's Department, increasing the Mental Evaluation Team (MET) by four deputies, and reassigning 16 deputies from the Threat Interdiction Unit (TIU) to the Special Assignment Unit (SAU) to focus on initiatives such as 'Operation Shelter the Unsheltered.' And SSLE has worked with Long Beach Police to create 'Quality of Life' teams of two full-time officers to focus exclusively on working with people who are homeless.

A big part of this work is to establish trust, and destigmatize homelessness and mental illness. Through 'Operation Shelter the Unsheltered', Metro policing contractors and PATH have provided housing and services to over 700 individuals since April 2020. Metro security officers also engage people who are homeless, escorting them off trains at the ends of rail lines and getting them assistance where possible.

While Metro's objective is to help people who are experiencing homelessness on our system, it also recognizes the urgency of curtailing behaviors and conditions that adversely affect the health and safety of other riders. This includes threatening or erratic behavior, open drug use, extreme odor, and defecation or urination in public spaces.

Call-Out Box: Flexible Dispatch System

One model currently under consideration is to pilot test a strategy that actively engages Metro front line employees to identify:

‹ People who appear to need homeless services or medical attention
‹ People exhibiting behaviors or conditions that adversely affect the health and safety of other riders.
‹ Fighting, or severe Code of Conduct violations that make other riders uncomfortable

When a situation is reported, a dispatcher could respond appropriately based on the nature of the report and available resources. Options could include:
‹ Looking at real-time bus camera footage to gather more information as needed (via the ITS bus tracker website)
‹ Dispatching ambassadors to peacefully intervene
‹ Dispatching homeless outreach workers
‹ Dispatching mental health professionals to do a welfare check and get people help
‹ Dispatching EMT's to address medical issues
‹ Dispatching law enforcement when needed to protect staff or customers, or to provide backup and presence to support the other categories of staff listed above

Training for all categories of staff would include anti-bias, mental health and de-escalation. This concept is one idea for reimagining security, and Metro will be convening a new Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) to help shape future improvements to Metro's security and actions to move toward racial justice and equity.

Interventions should be appropriate to the needs of each person. For example, for people who suffer from poor hygiene, staff can help connect them to showers and fresh clothing, or can distribute toiletries (toothpaste, toothbrush, deodorant, feminine products, perhaps bandages and Neosporin for open wounds, even adult diapers for those who need them). Another idea would be to partner with organizations like Lava Mae to offer free mobile showers and fresh clothing to people experiencing homelessness early in the morning before stations open so that people can clean up before entering the Metro system.

Metro is currently in the process of reimagining security in response to calls for racial justice, and the Metro Board has directed that more resources be allocated to homeless outreach services. The agency

plans to reallocate up to $3.5 million from security to PATH or other social service providers, and will look for additional opportunities going forward.

Despite significant efforts, however, the scale of homelessness on the system far exceeds the availability of homeless outreach, services, and housing, and it may get worse due to recent economic distress and housing insecurity. Metro would like to work towards a goal of reducing the number of people experiencing homelessness on the Metro system by at least 50% by connecting individuals to better options for shelter than riding Metro vehicles. The following recommendations are designed to ramp up towards that goal as funding becomes available.

Recommendations:

1. By April 1, 2021, Metro to pilot test a flexible dispatch concept whereby Metro responds to safety and security issues on the system by dispatching appropriate staff: from homeless outreach or mental health workers to unarmed security ambassadors or law enforcement as the situation demands. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirements.

2. By July 1, 2021, SSLE to expand and enhance homeless outreach teams including on-call nursing, mental health and addiction services; temporarily provide emergency short term shelter pending more housing from local and regional partners (see recommendations 3 and 4 below); test using unarmed security ambassadors to fill gaps in terminus station assistance and intercede with people who are experiencing homelessness on Metro to get them the help they need; and initiate regular, statistically valid counts to gauge results. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirements. Note Metro's approach to homelessness is subject to change based on input from a new Transit Public Safety Advisory Committee that will begin advising Metro in 2021.

3. By January 31, 2021, Metro Government Relations to initiate work with other transit agencies in California to request that a portion of existing and new sources of local, regional, and State homelessness funding be earmarked for transit homeless outreach teams, housing and services.

4. By April 1, 2021, Metro Community Relations to initiate work with local and regional partners to provide more shelter and housing to help Metro towards reducing homelessness on the system by at least 50%.

Customers want a clean system when they ride transit, and hundreds of custodians and service attendants fan out across the Metro system every day to clean and disinfect stations, vehicles and bus stops. Of course, the COVID-19 pandemic has raised the bar, and customers want to know that surfaces they touch are disinfected. Here are some sample comments about Metro cleanliness:

- "I don't feel safe when riding or even waiting for the train. It smells, it's dirty and some patrons don't care about cleanliness and I don't see it being enforced." (COVID-19 Survey Comments)
- "Train stations areas like the stair wells, hand railings, and elevator interiors-glass, control panels, baseboards need to be addressed seriously regarding infection control-disinfection cleaning. Regular attention to elevator floors, due to riders urinating on them." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)
- "The Metro elevators are not cleaned, I have been inside, and the truth is they are in bad condition" (COVID-19 Survey Comment, Spanish language)
- "Cleanliness. The trains, train stations, bathrooms at Union Station, and passageways, over hangs and entrance ways throughout the Metro network are FILTHY. Trash, urine, feces, vomit, diapers." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)
- "Please replace the filthy upholstered seats with something that can be properly cleaned." (COVID-19 Survey Comment)

Odor is a key issue for customers because it is invasive and hard to block out. Women tend to have stronger concerns about cleaning than men, according to the 2019 Understanding How Women Travel Study. In the study, 23% of women don't think the system feels clean, so it is important that Metro ensures women's feedback is included in cleaning protocols and standards.

Every day, buses are vacuumed and mopped, windows and poles are wiped down, seats are cleaned, and any gum or graffiti is removed. And monthly, deeper cleaning is done, including around doors and vents, and the work is inspected.

Trains are cleaned daily in the yards, and this includes sweeping, mopping, cleaning seats, stanchions and windows, and removing graffiti and gum. It also includes disinfection due to COVID-19. Monthly, deeper cleaning includes floor scrubbing, seat deep cleaning or replacement, scrubbing of panels, paint touch-ups, and inspection of the work.

In addition, cleanliness issues on in-service trains are addressed on an as-needed basis at these stations:

- Union Station
- 7th Street/Metro
- Redondo Beach Station
- Downtown Santa Monica
- Long Beach Station
- North Hollywood
- Wilshire/Western
- Norwalk
- Atlantic
- Azusa

Prior to COVID-19, in-service trains were given a quick clean/pickup at terminus stations on several lines, but that practice has been suspended for now to allow for greater cleaning and disinfection work in the yards.

Train stations are cleaned at least twice daily, including emptying trash, spot sweeping and mopping of floors and stairs, dusting and wiping ticket machines, map cases, handrails and pylons, elevator cleanup, and graffiti removal. To keep riders safe during the COVID-19 pandemic, Metro disinfects touch points such as handrails, ticket vending machines, elevators and escalators. Also, stations are pressure washed at least once a week.

Metro also has programs to clean trackways and surrounding areas, and to address encampments as needed for the safety of the system while providing outreach and placement for people who are

homeless. Encampment removal has been temporarily suspended due to the pandemic. It should be noted that in some cases, Metro areas that need cleaning are on property that is owned by a third-party and inaccessible.

Bus Stops and Zones has 26 additional field staff that fan out over Metro's service area, responding to calls through Customer Care and reports from road supervisors, as well as routinely inspecting stops, busways stations and terminals. Tasks include fixing or decaling signs and repairing other infrastructure, pressure washing bus zones, and ensuring the bus zone is clear.

Note that during the pandemic, Metro cleaning is impacted by employees out on COVID-19 leave, and fiscal limitations that necessitated cancellation of overtime and a hiring freeze.

In terms of cleaning products, Metro is among the leaders in the transit industry. The EPA is finalizing a report on a cleaning product Metro has used on the rail system for the last four years, and has found that it offers long lasting antimicrobial and antiviral protection, as well as odor reduction. Metro is now using this product throughout the system, including on buses.
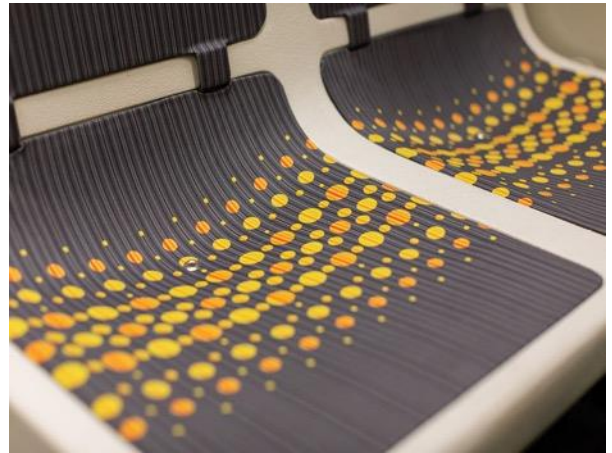
Having adequate cleaning facilities and equipment is also important. Currently, many stations lack areas to store cleaning devices, running water and places for staff to dispose of trash, so staff have to carry equipment with them and take a cart on board trains from one station to another. Adding cleaning closets and plumbing at stations is one option to consider. Another option could be to redesign cleaning carts to make them more mobile and easier to handle.

Numerous other issues intersect with cleanliness. Customers may feel Metro is unsanitary if fellow riders emit strong odors, appear unhygienic or engage in open drug use (see Homelessness section of this report). For elevators that suffer from human waste or drug use, Metro may want to consider an elevator attendant program similar to the successful program at BART in partnership with Urban Alchemy, a nonprofit which helps youth and formerly incarcerated people of all ages obtain job opportunities. Elevators are essential for people with disabilities, as well as travelers with luggage.

Also, if facilities or equipment look dilapidated, Metro can be perceived as unsafe or unclean. For example, if customers see cracked tiles, rotting metal or faded surfaces, they may perceive that Metro lacks attention or care to keeping the system in good order. Fortunately, on the rail side, Metro is among the leaders in the transit industry in addressing infrastructure issues. The Station Evaluation Program regularly inspects 32 aspects of stations ranging from customer information displays, to stairs, elevators, lighting, seating, TAP machines, and signage. With this program, staff also respond to social media reports and go into the field to observe and correct conditions reported by customers. The vendor who inspects stations recently withdrew from the Metro contract, and the agency is working to replace them. In the meantime, Metro staff is filling in to continue the work as much as possible.

The Station Evaluation Program recently transitioned from collecting data on paper to using electronic tablets. This enables inspectors to snap pictures of problems they observe, and the system automatically generates trouble tickets for quicker response and tracks responses to ensure all issues are addressed.

Another improvement is a transition from cloth seating to vinyl seats. This is being done in conjunction with the overhaul of old vehicles and acquisition of new vehicles. The annual Customer Experience Plans will report the status of vinyl seat installations each year until the transition is fully complete. Funding remains an issue to include vinyl seats on the new Kinkysharyo (P3010) LRVs and to incorporate vinyl seating on buses.

Recommendations:

1. By June 30, 2021, Metro Operations to evaluate opportunities and funding requirements to provide facilities and equipment to enhance the productivity, working conditions, and effectiveness of custodians and service attendants.

2. By June 30, 2021, Metro Real Estate to provide a report that summarizes efforts to work with neighboring property owners to clean up trash near the Metro right of way, and collaborate with Operations, SSLE, and Community Relations to implement strategies to address outstanding issues.

3. By June 30, 2021, Metro Operations and System Security and Law Enforcement (SSLE) to implement an elevator attendant pilot program similar to the successful program at BART to deter crime, human waste and drug use in elevators, and make them safe and pleasant for seniors, people with disabilities, travelers with luggage, and others. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirement.

4. By June 30, 2021, Metro Operations to resume vinyl seat transition. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirement.

5. By September 30, 2021, Metro's Office of Extraordinary Innovation (OEI) to work with Operations to test odor meters for station inspections, with an emphasis on elevators, escalators, stairwells, bus stops, and other areas where urination or defecation tend to occur. If this turns out to be viable, odor meters would help Metro track progress on this important aspect of the customer experience.

6. By November 1, 2021, Metro Operations to consider proposal to fill gaps in end of line cleaning, and cover every rail terminus during all hours of service, for consideration in the FY23 budget.

7. By November 1, 2021, Metro Operations to develop a scope, cost estimate for consideration in the FY23 budget, and pros and cons related to increasing custodial staff and materials for:

    o   Staff quick wipe-downs at selected mid-line train stations during less-crowded times, where service attendants could quickly board the train, wipe down selected surfaces,

soak up liquid spills, pick up trash, and address biohazards reported by customers or employees, riding the train a few stops when necessary to avoid any holdup to service. This technique would be highly visible to customers and help demonstrate that Metro cares about cleanliness. It is recommended that Metro Operations gather information from other agencies that have implemented mid-line cleaning, including BART.

8. By December 31, 2021, Metro Human Capital and Development, Communications, and the Customer Experience Office to consider designating occasional days when employees who ride Metro could consider volunteering to pick up garbage they see during their ride. Metro could provide PPE, garbage bags with a Metro logo, and gloves. This would be a great way for employees at all levels to pitch in to keep Metro clean, compliment Metro Marketing's We're Here for You campaign, and show customers that we care. (subject to discussion with Metro labor representatives).

6. Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

For Metro to maintain a sustained focus on the Customer Experience, key performance indices (KPI's) are needed. To develop KPI's, staff considered seven stages of the customer journey, from planning a trip to getting from the bus or train to the final destination:

Plan > Access > Wait > Pay > Ride > Connect > Egress

Based on this assessment, 40 KPI's were selected for tracking. To collect KPI data, a statistically sound, random cross section of customers will be asked to rate each of these KPI's from poor to excellent in annual Customer Experience surveys beginning in September 2020:

Plan:

1. Ease of getting info to plan my trips
2. *metro.net* website
3. Metro apps

Access:

4. Ease of getting to my stop or station
5. Car parking
6. Bicycle parking

Wait:

7. Personal security at stop/station
8. Cleanliness of the area where I waited for my bus or train
9. Seating at Metro stop or station
10. Shade at Metro stop or station
11. How often the bus or train comes
12. Availability of accurate arrival time info
13. Vehicles come on time

Pay:

14. Ease of fare payment

Ride:

15. Personal security while riding
16. Presence of security staff
17. On-board trip time
18. Cleanliness inside the bus or train

19. Age/condition of vehicles
20. Enough room on the bus or train
21. Comfort of seats
22. Noise level inside bus or train
23. Comfortable temperature
24. Next stop information
25. Delay/service advisories
26. Wi-Fi availability and quality
27. Smooth ride

Connect:

28. Knowing where to go to connect with another bus or train (if you transfer)
29. Timeliness of connection to other bus or train

Egress:

30. Ease of getting from my stop or station to my destination

Other:

31. Hours of operation
32. Enforcement of Metro rules
33. Metro system kept free of graffiti
34. Safe from sexual harassment
35. Safe from harassment based on my race or ethnicity
36. Addressing homelessness on the Metro system
37. Escalators
38. Elevators
39. Signage
40. Helpfulness and courtesy of Metro employees

Customers will also be asked to provide specific comments about items they rate low. Staff will mine this data to develop a deeper understanding of customer experience issues to address in future Customer Experience Plans. The survey will also point us to additional areas to tackle in future Customer Experience Plans.

In addition, the following KPI's have been developed to gauge progress on Better Bus improvements:

1. Percent change in average bus travel speeds for target bus corridors
2. Total miles of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridors in the County
3. Total miles of bus-only lanes in the county
4. Bus on-time performance
5. Measure of headway regularity (specific KPI's TBD)
6. Cancelled assignment hours as % of revenue service hours
7. Operator hiring and retention levels (specific KPI's TBD)
8. Mean Miles Between Mechanical Failures Requiring Bus Exchange (MMBMF)
9. Percentage of customers with 10 minutes or better frequency

10. % of trips over the load factor standard (note: this is individual trips, not on average)
11. Wheelchair pass-ups as % of wheelchair trips
12. Percentage of bus stops that have TAP loading and purchasing options that accept cash payment within 1/4 mile (subject to decision about Metro Fareless System Initiative)
13. 95th percentile API response time of TAP Mobile
14. System availability of TAP Mobile
15. System availability of Bus Mobile Validators (BMVs)
16. Percentage of passenger trips with all-door boarding (subject to decision about Metro Fareless System Initiative)
17. Accuracy of trip plan output (specific KPI's TBD)
18. System availability of Bus Arrival Prediction System
19. Percentage of bus routers with full functionality
20. Accuracy of real-time arrival prediction (specific KPI's TBD)
21. Percent of County residents with a 1/2-mile walk of a High Quality Transit Area
22. Percentage of trips that are one-seat rides
23. Percentage of trip destinations (by all modes) within 1/4 mile of bus stop
24. Average response time to incidents reported in the TransitWatch app (specific KPI's TBD)
25. Percentage of bus rolling stock with vinyl/plastic seats
26. Percentage of riders wearing face coverings (temporary KPI during pandemic)
27. Accuracy of crowding prediction (specific KPI's TBD)
28. Percentage of stops that are ADA accessible
29. Percentage of stops that have a crosswalk at at least one adjacent intersection
30. Percentage of bus stops with shelters
31. Percentage of bus stops with shade trees
32. Percentage of stops with benches, seating, or lean bars
33. Percentage of bus stops with trash receptacle
34. Percentage of bus stops with real-time displays
35. Percentage of stops with lighting within 50 feet
36. Audio next stop arrival performance (specific KPI's TBD)
37. Failure to offer wheelchair/mobility aid securement/lap and shoulder as a percentage of all wheelchair boardings (specific KPI's TBD)

7. Agency-Wide Recommendations

This report includes 37 recommendations to address areas for improvement. Each recommendation shows responsible departments and a deadline. In addition, the following four agency-wide recommendations are proposed:

1. As the COVID-19 pandemic eases and revenues bounce back, Metro's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to ensure that all customer experience improvements in this Plan are considered for funding. See Figure 3 below for a menu of recommended investments to improve the customer experience. These are all incremental to all the daily core functions to operate the system. Note that Metro's FY21 budget is 16.5% less than the prior year, due in large part to the pandemic's fiscal challenges, so funding these customer experience improvements will depend on how quickly the pandemic eases and the economy rebounds. Some of the items might also be addressed through third party or grant funding.

2. By June 30, 2021, Metro's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to work with the Executive Officer for Customer Experience to ensure that responsible departments incorporate all *2020 Customer Experience Plan* recommendations into the FY22 Comprehensive Agencywide Performance Evaluation (CAPE) system, and report progress quarterly.

3. By June 30, 2021, Human Capital & Development to work with the Executive Officer for Customer Experience to ensure that all *2020 Customer Experience Plan* recommendations are incorporated into FY22 Individual Performance Plans (IPPs).

4. Metro to adopt modern user experience testing and set customer acceptance standards to ensure new and upgraded products and services improve the customer experience. By June 30, 2021, the Executive Officer for Customer Experience will inventory major customer facing initiatives – current and future, and work with the Chief Policy Officer to establish policies to and procedures to implement this recommendation.

Figure 3

Project/Initiative	Description	FY21 midyr	FY22	FY23	FY24
	Figure 3: Menu of Potential Investments to Improve The Customer Experience				
Shared ride service to the rescue	A pilot program that quickly identifies customers impacted by a missed run or pass-up in real-time, and offers them a free ride code for an on-demand shared ride service. Covers 35,000 rides.	$ 100,000	$ 400,000		
Elevator Attendants	provide attendants at selected elevators to deter human waste and drug use, similar to the successful BART program (budget covers pilot program)	$ 200,000	$ 800,000	TBD	TBD
Work towards reducing homelessness on Metro by 50%	Limited emergency short term shelter pending more housing from local and regional partners	$2,000,000	$ 2,000,000	$ -	$ -
	Enhanced homeless outreach teams and related mental health, addiction, nursing, and shelter services. Expands from eight teams of five to 15 teams of three at minimal cost.	$ -	$ 1,100,000	$ 1,122,000	TBD
	Fill gaps in end-station assistance to intercede with people who are experiencing homelessness on Metro and get them the help they need. Funding is for a 9 month pilot program of unarmed security ambassadors plus law enforcement as backup on weekdays starting April 1	$2,800,000	$ 5,575,000	TBD	TBD
	Regular counts to monitor trends and gauge the success of Metro efforts to address homelessness	$ 100,000	$ 250,000	$ 250,000	TBD
Flexible dispatch pilot test	Flexible dispatch concept. Cost of dispatchers to enable Metro to respond to problems on the system with appropriate staff: from homeless outreach or mental health workers to unarmed security ambassadors or law enforcement as the situation demands.		$ 1,100,000	$ 1,133,000	TBD
Increase TransitWatch use	Digital advertising campaign to increase TransitWatch downloads and use to keep Metro safe.	$ 100,000	$ 150,000	$ -	
Website for Better Bus launch (FY21), and CRM to enhance rider communications (FY22)	Interactive website to support Better Bus launch, plus real-time, automated system to communicate with riders, including during emergency shutdowns. Customize to each rider based on routes and times they ride, and the channels they use: metro.net, third-party apps like Google Maps and *Transit* , push notifications, text alerts, social media. note: also requires unfreezing two positions in Digital Services.	$ 250,000	$ 2,500,000	$ 550,000	$ 561,000
Customer Experience Surveys	annual on-board customer surveys	$ 10,000	$ 140,000	$ 142,800	$ 145,656
Employee Surveys	conduct employee survey every two years to gauge progress towards developing a customer-first culture, and to assess internal customer service between departments (includes follow-up coaching/expertise for departments)	$ 15,000	$ 185,000	$ -	$ 192,474
Complete vinyl seating transition	replace fabric seats with easier-to-clean vinyl		$ 3,000,000	$ 5,000,000	$ 1,000,000

Figure 3: Menu of Potential Investments to Improve The Customer Experience (continued)					
Project/Initiative	Description	FY21 midyr	FY22	FY23	FY24
Labor budget to keep Cancelled Assignment under 1%	order of magnitude cost to shift average OAR from 1.18-1.20 to 1.25 to avoid missed bus runs. This is scalable to various OAR levels.		$ 15,000,000	$ 15,300,000	$ 15,606,000
Headway management best practice review	conduct best practices research on headway management to even out bus spacing and loads on high frequency routes		$ 150,000	$ -	$ -
Acceleration of Call Point Security Project	Blue light boxes recommended by Women and Girls Governing Council to improve security on the rail system		$ 5,000,000	$ -	$ -
Surprise and Delight	Arts, music, and customer giveaways to surprise and delight customers, per Board motion 45.1		$ 400,000	$ 408,000	$ 416,160
FY22 Bus Service Scenario (6.5m rsh)	Potential bus frequency improvements. Incremental cost relative to FY21 (5.6m rsh)		$ 131,148,000	$ 133,770,960	$ 136,446,379
NextGen Scenario A/B (7.1m rsh)	Potential bus frequency improvements. Incremental cost relative to FY22.			$ 87,432,000	$ 89,180,640
NextGen Scenario C (9.4m rsh)	Potential bus frequency improvements. Feasibility and timing TBD. Incremental cost of $335,156,000 relative to NextGen Scenario A/B.				TBD
Fill gaps in train interior EOL cleaning	Staff every rail terminus during extended hours of service to perform end-of-line cleaning, Estimate includes 30% contingency.			$ 12,000,000	$ 12,240,000
Highly-visible, train interior mid-line cleaning	Staff quick wipe-downs at additional mid-line train stations during less-crowded times, where service attendants could quickly board the train, wipe down selected surfaces, soak up liquid spills, pick up trash, and address biohazards reported by customers or employees.			TBD	TBD
ATMS 2	replacement of aging information systems involved in delivering real time information to modernize functionality and improve reliability - this shows first two years of total investment of $105M.			$ 10,000,000	$ 10,000,000
Bus stop improvements	1200 additional signs with real time information for use by bus riders		$ 1,139,793	$ 12,537,727	$ 1,453,200
	Metro has over 13,000 stops. This increases the % with shelters from 24% to 60%.			$ 58,220,000	$ 4,650,000
	Seats and solar lights attach to bus stop posts			$ 6,800,000	$ 544,000
TOTALS:		$5,575,000	$170,037,793	$ 344,666,487	$272,435,509

Future Customer
Experience Plans

8. Future Customer Experience Plans

The *2020 Customer Experience Plan* was developed on a compressed schedule (three months). Starting in 2021, with additional time and resources, the breadth and depth of the Plan will develop further.

8.1 Journey mapping and equity

For the 2021 *Customer Experience Plan*, Metro plans to conduct Journey Mapping to obtain a deeper understanding of customer journeys. Metro customers are diverse and have different needs when riding our system. For example, some types of customers are:

Frequent riders	Women and girls	People who have a smartphone
Occasional riders	People travelling with children or caregivers	People who can't afford a smartphone
Out-of-towners	People with disabilities (including mobility, blind/visually impaired, deaf)	People needing bicycle accommodation
Students	People who speak English	People who experience homelessness
Senior citizens	People who speak other languages/Limited English Proficient (LEP)	LGBTQ+ riders

To provide a better experience for each type of customer, we have to understand every step of their journey, from planning their trip all the way to reaching their destination.

Plan → Access → Wait → Pay → Ride → Connect → Egress

The intent of Journey Mapping is to conduct in-depth interviews with each type of customer about each step of their journey: what they experience, what they see, what they hear, what they smell, and what they feel. These interviews will be used to help develop future Customer Experience Plans. They will help staff to dig deeper into the customer experience, and will provide an equity lens to understand the customer experiences for many different kinds of riders.

Call-Out Box: Innovative Wayfinding

Navigating through Union Station can prove challenging to customers who are blind or visually impaired. Therefore, in October 2019 Metro began testing a new audio wayfinding technology in Union Station. The technology consists of pixelated tags (similar to QR codes) and a smartphone app. A user's smartphone camera scans the surroundings for tags while the app recites the tag's stored information. Each tag is strategically placed and individually programmed with wayfinding information including distance and direction to platforms, transit arrival and departure information, and ticket kiosks and restroom locations. The tags can be read from up to 39 feet away in a fraction of a second, even while the camera is in motion. Tags were placed throughout Union Station, creating audio pathways to the B (Red), D (Purple), and L (Gold) Line platforms, Amtrak and Metrolink platforms, Patsaouras Bus Plaza, ticket vending machines, fare gates, elevators and emergency telephones.

Some comments from the test group: "I would feel more comfortable traveling by myself if this was available everywhere" and "This feels similar to what sighted people can do, being able to see signage." Metro has applied for a grant to expand this program to more locations.

Call-Out box: Equity

Equity is central to customer experience planning. Metro wants to improve customer experiences for all riders, and the 2021 Plan will focus on the needs of diverse types of riders such as people with disabilities, those who cannot afford smartphones or data plans, women and girls, and riders who speak other languages/Limited English Proficient (LEP). Moreover, the Plan will incorporate input from Metro's Executive Officer for Equity and Race, and the Metro Office of Civil Rights & Inclusion.

A recent example of a customer experience initiative with an equity lens was the approach formulated for the distribution of Metro masks to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Metro strategically distributed masks to areas with high rates of COVID-19 infection and to equity focus communities that may not have the financial resources to obtain masks on their own and where people disproportionately have preexisting medical conditions.

Call-Out box: Mystery Shopping Program

Metro has an innovative Mystery Rider Program that tracks Bus Operator performance relative to accessibility, safety and customer service. Surveyors or "secret shoppers" ride Metro buses throughout LA County and record their observations. Half (50%) of the trips are made by surveyors who use wheelchairs, and most observations are made by surveyors with disabilities. The reported data from the surveys allows Metro to track performance, identify trends, improve training, and most importantly, continually strive to remove barriers for customers with disabilities.

Metro also has a Mystery Rider Program that evaluates how well Metro meets the needs of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) customers. Surveyors ride the system, visit Metro customer service centers and contact the call center to obtain information in multiple languages. The surveyors are native speakers of the seven LEP languages identified in Metro's 2019 Four-Factor Analysis: Armenian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese. The results are used by the Metro Office of Civil Rights & Inclusion to ensure staff is properly trained and is using the available tools to interact with LEP customers.

8.2 Quadrant chart

Future Customer Experience Plans will include a Quadrant Chart, which will array customer ratings and importance levels for approximately 40 aspects of service to identify pain points that are most important and most in need of improvement.

More important	TARGET ISSUES	
Less important		
	Aspects rated low	Aspects rated high

8.3 Worldwide best practice review

Future Customer Experience Plans will include examples of best practices from around the world.

8.4 Employee input

Metro employees from throughout the organization, including frontline workers, have important insights into customer experience issues and solutions. Future Customer Experience Plans will tap employees as an important source of information.

8.5 Focus on organizational culture and values

Every day, employees from throughout the organization have opportunities to impact the customer experience. When employees are committed to serving the community and providing good experiences

to riders, they are more likely to go the extra mile to make a difference. For example, an employee might stop to help out-of-towners figure out how to buy a TAP card, or a project manager overseeing new construction might decide to include a few extra benches or shade trees, a bus operator may greet customers as they board with a warm greeting, or a security officer may reunite a person experiencing homelessness with their family to help get them the assistance they need.

Customer experience can't just be a top down exercise. It requires a customer experience focus and culture at every level to be successful, and it requires that Metro's leadership and employees be able to see issues from a customer perspective, and ask themselves tough questions like "Is good, good enough?," and "how do we go the extra mile to really WOW people." It can't just be about designing services that are easy to deliver. The customer has to come first, and this requires a change in mindset.

To strengthen and expand a customer experience culture at Metro, an interdepartmental task force will be established to focus on hiring, training, coaching, recognition, listening to employees, modeling of customer experience attitudes by Metro leadership, riding the system to see what customers see, role mapping to ensure all employees understand how their job impacts the customer, bringing in outside experts to talk about Customer Experience, and establishing forums (possibly online) where customer-focused employees can connect, share tips, and support each other.

8.6 Broader range of customers
The focus of the *2020 Customer Experience Plan* is on Metro Bus and Metro Rail riders. Eventually though, Metro Customer Experience Plans will expand to cover additional modes of travel such as Microtransit, mobility on demand, bike share, or freeway services.

8.7 Focus on internal customer service
Future Customer Experience Plans will also expand to cover services provided between internal departments. This could help the organization become more effective and efficient in delivering programs, projects, and services to the public.

8.8 Surprise and delight
Future Customer Experience Plans may surprise and delight Metro customers with art, music, or giveaways when they least expect it. Stay tuned for future imaginative programs that distinguish Metro customer experience from all other transit agencies.

Call-Out box: Metro Art

Metro is recognized internationally for its innovative, award-winning public art expressing the vibrancy and spirit of our region and elevating the customer experience. As the County's cultural connector, Metro Art provides equitable access to arts and culture for our diverse ridership and engages artists and communities through a range of initiatives.

Volunteer docents provide free station art tours, sharing insights into artists backgrounds, inspirations and creative processes. These memorable guided discussions boost public perceptions of transit, promote rider etiquette and offer opportunities for discovery. Metro has been tracking participant satisfaction since project inception and reports a 99.9% satisfaction rate.

Recognizing the arts as a powerful way to bring people together and improve the quality of life for LA County residents and visitors, Metro's Board of Directors recently directed staff to "Uplift the Human Spirit through Metro Art" and to include artists in the reimagining of transportation. This program will launch with Silver Linings, a new series of works by local artists centered around human connections to be featured on buses and trains. The Board allocated funds to commission a broad range of local artists, including musicians and dancers, to surprise, delight and inspire.

MacArthur Park, Urban Oasis (2010) by Sonia Romero, Westlake/MacArthur Park Station.

8.9 Focus on out-of-town visitors

Finally, future Customer Experience Plans will look at the needs of out-of-town visitors, and how to make the Metro system as accessible and user-friendly as possible. This will help Metro provide better connectivity to airports, and prepare for Los Angeles to be on the world's stage as the host of the 2028 Olympics. It will also help local residents who are new to LA or new to the transit system access the system more easily.

9. Acknowledgements

Thank you to the Metro Board of Directors for initiating the Customer Experience Program at Metro with support from Chief Executive Officer Phil Washington and Chief of Staff Nadine Lee. This document was authored by Aaron Weinstein, Executive Officer for Customer Experience, with participation from over 100 staff:

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- Vanessa Smith – Interim Executive Officer, Customer Care

9. Appendix – Action Plan Recap

7. Agency-Wide Recommendations	1. As the COVID-19 pandemic eases and revenues bounce back, Metro's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to ensure that all customer experience improvements in this Plan are considered for funding. See Figure 3 above for a menu of recommended investments to improve the customer experience. 2. By June 30, 2021, Metro's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to work with the Executive Officer for Customer Experience to ensure that responsible departments incorporate all 2020 Customer Experience Plan recommendations into the FY22 Comprehensive Agencywide Performance Evaluation (CAPE) system, and report progress quarterly. 3. By June 30, 2021, Human Capital & Development to work with the Executive Officer for Customer Experience to ensure that all 2020 Customer Experience Plan recommendations are incorporated into FY22 Individual Performance Plans (IPPs). 4. Metro to adopt modern user experience testing and set customer acceptance standards to ensure new and upgraded products and services improve the customer experience. By June 30, 2021, the Executive Officer for Customer Experience will inventory major customer facing initiatives – current and future, and work with the Chief Policy Officer to establish policies to and procedures to implement this recommendation.
5.01 Metro Bus reliability	1. By January 15, 2021 Metro Operations to specify the Operator Assignment Ratio needed to meet the 1% cancelled assignment limit for consideration in the FY22 budget. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirement to move to a 1.25 OAR for example. 2. By March 1, 2021, Metro's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to establish a process for budget flexibility to move funding between categories (e.g. between authorized headcount, overtime and hiring bonuses) and to more nimbly add service as needed mid-year to meet ridership demand. This is especially important due to uncertainty about the pace of ridership restoration post-COVID-19. 3. By April 1, 2021, Metro Marketing and OEI to work with Customer Care to implement a short- term pilot program that quickly identifies customers impacted by a missed run or pass-up in real time, and offers them in real time a free ride code for an on-demand shared ride service. This should also meet the needs of people with disabilities, possibly through Access Services. This will help customers get where they are going on time, and show them that Metro truly cares about their well-being. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirement. 4. By June 30, 2021, Metro's Bus Operator Task Force to develop options and recommendations for ways to meet the 1% cancelled assignment limit (subject to discussion with Metro labor representatives). Specific options to consider include: ○ Fast track hiring for licensed commercial drivers and former and current transit agency bus operators, and flexibility to hire them directly into full time positions

	o Bus operator applicants being able to shadow a bus operator for a day to see what the job entails o Continuous mentorship of bus operators for the first year, beyond the current three-week period, to improve retention o Possible milestone bonuses to boost retention (e.g. after two years of service) o Reevaluation of shift bidding and work rules to provide as much latitude as possible to more finely tailor extra board assignments to days and locations where the need is expected to be greatest based on historical patterns. The goal is to provide as much flexibility as possible to fill potential Missed Assignments on short notice when needed to avoid a missed run o Evaluation of improvements in working conditions to give bus operators the support they need for work/life balance o Evaluation of pooling some extra boards across divisions (which may require cross-training on different bus equipment and different routes), borrowing from rail extra boards or operations supervisors who have recent bus operating experience, or allowing part-time operators to cover assignments on short notice when there are no other options to avoid a cancelled assignment o Considering use of technology to give division markup staff more tools to fill assignments at the last minute. For example, look at software/apps used by school districts to quickly schedule substitute teachers to ensure all classrooms are covered 5. By June 30, 2021, the Better Bus Stops working group to work with Metro Bus Operations and Metro Stops and Zones to identify locations where inadequate lighting causes pass-ups, and provide recommendations on incentivizing municipalities to add lighting (or push-button beacons as used by Big Blue Bus in Santa Monica). 6. By May 1, 2021, Metro Operations to develop a plan for divisions to communicate revised pass-up procedures with each bus operator multiple times when COVID-19 dissipates, and confirm that each bus operator understands what is expected.
5.02 Accuracy of real-time info	1. By February 1, 2021, the Real-time Information Team to develop a charter and clearly identify scope of work, schedule, budget, and roles and responsibilities to provide high quality real time information and predictions to Metro riders. 2. By February 1, 2021, the Real-time Information Team to develop a comprehensive set of metrics for monitoring major points of failure (including hardware, software, communication, and operating procedure issues), a plan for monitoring the metrics, and a procedure for escalating issues that cannot be quickly solved by the team members. 3. By March 1, 2021, Metro ITS to release a real-time vehicle position Application Programming Interface (API) feed compliant with the GTFS RT standard to help third-party apps and websites accurately predict Metro bus and train arrivals. 4. By June 30, 2021, to address operational changes that can occur such as detours and missed runs, the Real-time Information Team to work with Operations to develop required internal work flows and release a more accurate alerts API feed compliant with the GTFS RT standard, and

	incorporate delay advisories prominently on the Metro website, apps, and real-time information digital displays.
	5. By June 30, 2021, to improve dissemination of real time information, OEI, Countywide Planning, and Stops and Zones to test lower cost "e-paper" displays operated by solar panels, similar to what is currently being tested in London and Big Blue Bus in Santa Monica.
	6. By June 30, 2021, Marketing and Research to study technology habits of Metro riders and evaluate options to disseminate real-time information, including to riders without smartphones and people with disabilities.
5.03 Metro Bus frequency	1. By April 1, 2021, as part of the FY22 budget development, Metro Operations and OMB to update the rollout schedule for the NextGen phases based on ridership and revenue trends.
5.04 Bus stops	1. By March 1, 2021, the Better Bus Stop working group to finalize a system for prioritizing which bus stops receive amenities first, based on Equity Focus Communities, weekday bus boardings, wait time, urban heat, high collision areas, and the presence of schools, senior centers and other public facilities. The criteria will be developed in partnership with cities in the Metro service area.
	2. By April 1, 2021, the Better Bus Stop working group, in consultation with subregional stakeholders, to recommend bus stop improvements for potential inclusion in local return project plans and uses.
	3. By April 1, 2021, Metro Real Estate to finalize an agreement to dedicate a portion of possible new digital billboard revenue to fund bus stop improvements.
	4. By June 30, 2021, Metro's OEI, Countywide Planning, Service Planning, and Office of Management and Budget to work with external fund sources, including local jurisdiction street furniture/advertising contracts, to develop a funding plan to provide seating and shade for at least 60% of Metro bus stops, along with low-cost solar lighting, new bus signs, real-time information, and low-cost seating.
	5. By Dec 31, 2021, Stops and Zones and Community Relations to work with municipalities to test inviting neighborhoods and businesses to adopt bus stops, as done in other cities.
	6. By Dec 31, 2021, the Better Bus Stops working group, Stops and Zones, Customer Relations, and Community Relations to work with the City of LA and at least two other cities in the Metro service area to formalize policies and procedures to keep bus stop areas clean, to address homelessness, and to develop a system to invite bus riders to report bus stop issues.
5.05 Ease of payment	1. By June 30, 2021 TAP to seek authorization to distribute at least 100,000 additional free cards to areas with low TAP use, and consider new incentives to use TAP instead of cash. Additionally, it is recommended that Metro have ambassadors with iPads assist riders in low TAP use areas with registering their TAP cards so that users enjoy balance protection, gain a sense of ownership of their TAP card, and get familiar with the convenient taptogo.net website.
	2. By January 31, 2021, as part of the midyear budget process, OMB to revisit local programming budget limits that discourage LIFE program growth.

	3. By March 1, 2021, OEI to organize focus groups or phone interviews with cash-paying and non-smartphone transit riders to better assess their needs and inform the LIFE discount campaign. 4. By April 1, 2021, LIFE program to work with Metro Marketing, Customer Care, and municipal transit agencies and other TAP partners to review procedures and eligibility requirements, such as a government issued photo ID requirement, and further improve the ease of applying. This review should also evaluate ways to enable quick third-party validation of eligibility based on eligibility for other government aid programs. 5. By June 30, 2021, Metro Marketing to launch a new campaign to publicize LIFE discounts and the easier application process. 6. By June 30, 2021, TAP to prepare a strategy and expedited schedule to power third-party payment.
5.06 Speed	1. By February 1, 2021, the Better Bus team in conjunction with the City of LA to finalize the next round of bus-only lane improvements to continue the momentum from successes in 2020.
5.07 Crowding	1. While Metro cannot guarantee social distancing on all routes at all times, Metro will introduce a new service configuration in December 2020 that is expected to increase social distancing on targeted bus routes during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is expected to reduce the 10% of bus runs that exceed the temporary average daily load factor measure of 0.75 (a temporary change from the usual 1.3 standard due to COVID-19) to 3% or less based on current ridership levels. 2. By December 1, 2021, Metro Operations to engage a research center or consultant to conduct best practices research on headway management, and consider pilot testing headway management along Tier I service in 2022. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirement for the research phase.
5.08 Personal security	1. By February 1, 2021, Metro SSLE and Marketing to jointly set an ambitious goal for Metro Transit Watch market penetration. It is also recommended that, in addition to promoting the Metro Transit Watch app, communication campaigns widely publicize the 213-788-2777 text number (for people with phones that do not accommodate apps). See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirement.
5.09 Homelessness	1. By April 1, 2021, Metro to pilot test a flexible dispatch concept whereby Metro responds to safety and security issues on the system by dispatching appropriate staff: from homeless outreach or mental health workers to unarmed security ambassadors or law enforcement as the situation demands. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirements. 2. By July 1, 2021, SSLE to expand and enhance homeless outreach teams including on-call nursing, mental health and addiction services; temporarily provide emergency short term shelter pending more housing from local and regional partners (see recommendations 3 and 4 below); test using unarmed security ambassadors to fill gaps in terminus station assistance and intercede with people who are experiencing homelessness on Metro to get them the help they need; and initiate regular, statistically valid counts to gauge results. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirements. Note Metro's

	approach to homelessness is subject to change based on input from a new Transit Public Safety Advisory Committee that will begin advising Metro in 2021.
	3. By January 31, 2021, Metro Government Relations to initiate work with other transit agencies in California to request that a portion of existing and new sources of local, regional, and State homelessness funding be earmarked for transit homeless outreach teams, housing and services.
	4. By April 1, 2021, Metro Community Relations to initiate work with local and regional partners to provide more shelter and housing to help Metro towards reducing homelessness on the system by at least 50%.
5.10 Cleanliness	1. By June 30, 2021, Metro Operations to evaluate opportunities and funding requirements to provide facilities and equipment to enhance the productivity, working conditions, and effectiveness of custodians and service attendants.
	2. By June 30, 2021, Metro Real Estate to provide a report that summarizes efforts to work with neighboring property owners to clean up trash near the Metro right of way, and collaborate with Operations, SSLE, and Community Relations to implement strategies to address outstanding issues.
	3. By June 30, 2021, Metro Operations and System Security and Law Enforcement (SSLE) to implement an elevator attendant pilot program similar to the successful program at BART to deter crime, human waste and drug use in elevators, and make them safe and pleasant for seniors, people with disabilities, travelers with luggage, and others. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirement.
	4. By June 30, 2021, Metro Operations to resume vinyl seat transition. See Agency-Wide Recommendations for budget requirement.

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3rd Floor Board Room
Los Angeles, CA

Board Report

File #: 2018-0614, **File Type:** Motion / Motion Response   **Agenda Number:**

REGULAR BOARD MEETING
JUNE 28, 2018

Motion by:

GARCETTI, KUEHL, BONIN AND GARCIA
AS AMENDED BY BARGER

Related to Item 38: **NEXTGEN BUS STUDY SERVICE PARAMETERS**

MTA should strive to deliver the best customer experience of any public transit provider in America.

MTA's customers should be able to easily and conveniently access MTA services and data and feel assured that their transit trip will be fast, convenient, and reliable.

Additionally, MTA's customers should feel that MTA actively cares about their experience. MTA's customers should see a proven, constant, and continuous effort by MTA to improve the experience of using MTA's services.

Furthermore, MTA must demonstrate that its services are superior to alternatives.

The Ad Hoc Customer Experience Committee was formed to ensure that MTA was focused on these issues.

Since July, the ad hoc committee has met six times. The committee has examining a wide range of issues, including quality bus service, station cleanliness, TAP, pass programs, real-time data, service interruptions, marketing, Customer Care, system accessibility, and the causes of MTA's recent ridership trends.

In the coming fiscal year, the duties of the Ad Hoc Customer Experience Committee will transition to the Operations Committee.
However, as MTA continues important customer experience initiatives, especially the NextGen Bus Study, it is important that the Board remain engaged on customer experience issues.
Additionally, as MTA advances the NextGen Bus Study, it is appropriate for the Board to provide policy direction on the highest priorities for the future restructuring of the MTA bus network.

SUBJECT: MOTION BY GARCETTI, KUEHL, BONIN AND GARCIA

NEXTGEN BUS STUDY SERVICE PARAMETERS

WE THEREFORE MOVE THAT the Board:

A.   Rename the System Safety, Security and Operations Committee to the Operations, Safety, and Customer Experience Committee;

B.   Endorse Travel Speed, Service Frequency, and System Reliability as the highest priority service parameters to guide the work of the NextGen Bus Study;

WE FURTHER MOVE that the Board direct the CEO to:

C.   Develop customer experience key performance indicators (KPIs) within Operations, Communications, Information & Technology Services, TAP, System Security and Law Enforcement, and other functional areas of MTA to regularly report on the status of the system, transit service, and the transit service environment;

D.   Develop an Annual Customer Service and Experience Plan, including but not limited to improvements planned and desired for:

    1.   KPIs developed under section C. above
    2.   The status of Customer Service & Experience projects
    3.   Key accomplishments, objectives, and challenges in Customer Service and Customer Experience for the following budget year
    4.   Key accomplishments, objectives, and challenges in transit service marketing for the following budget year
    5.   The CEO's Ridership Initiatives, including the Customer Experience Strategist (Board File 2018-0365);

E.   Report back to the Operations Committee on all the above in 120 days.

BARGER AMENDMENT: continue to seek input and feedback on priorities from NextGen working groups and relevant community stakeholders.

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Board Report

File #: 2018-0668, **File Type:** Motion / Motion Response   **Agenda Number:** 33.

OPERATIONS, SAFETY, AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 21, 2019

SUBJECT: CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE MOTION 38.1 RESPONSE

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE the status update for Motion 38.1 about the customer experience program.

ISSUE

On June 21, 2018, the Board of Directors (Board) approved Motion 38 by Directors Garcetti, Kuehl, Bonin and Garcia (Attachment A), requesting staff to:

A. Rename the System Safety, Security, and Operations Committee to the Operations, Safety, and Customer Experience Committee;
B. Endorse Travel Speed, Service Frequency, and System Reliability as the highest priority service parameters to guide the work of the NextGen Bus Study;
C. Develop customer experience key performance indicators (KPIs) within Operations, Communications, Information & Technology Services, TAP, System Security and Law Enforcement, and other functional areas of MTA to regularly report on the status of the system, transit service, and the transit service environment;
D. Develop an Annual Customer Service and Experience Plan, including but not limited to improvements planned and desired for:
    1. KPIs developed under section C
    2. The status of the Customer Service & Experience projects
    3. Key accomplishments, objectives and challenges in Customer Service and Customer Experience for the following budget year
    4. Key accomplishments, objectives and challenges in transit service marketing for the following budget year
    5. The CEO's Ridership Initiatives, including the Customer Experience Service Strategist

BACKGROUND

The Customer Experience Committee was established from July 2017 through June 2018 to ensure that Metro services, projects and programs continue to be developed with a focus on the customer. An internal customer experience working group, with representatives from Operations, Security, OEI,

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IT, Communications, TAP and the Office of the CEO was formed to develop, track and monitor progress on Metro projects and initiatives focused on positively impacting customer service, experience and ridership.

DISCUSSION

Committee Renaming
Per the Board's directive, in July 2018 Metro staff renamed the System Safety, Security, and Operations Committee to the Operations, Safety, and Customer Experience Committee.

Service Parameters for NextGen
In October 2018, Metro staff provided an update on the NextGen Bus Study (NextGen Update: Transit Competitiveness and Market Potential; File ID: 2018-055; Attachment B) that provided information on transit competitiveness and market potential for bus trips. In that update, Metro staff explained that the transit journey consists of both on-board time and walk/wait time at the bus stop. For short trips, the walk/wait time, as part of the total trip is a larger factor to the customer. This can be mitigated with higher service frequencies for the local trips. In addition, reliability is critical for reducing wait time, both in terms of schedule adherence and more reliable real time information on next bus arrival times which helps reduce the perceived wait time (generally twice as long as actual) back to reality. For longer trips, on-board trip times are more critical to the customer and therefore warrant more attention on travel speed. For this reason, NextGen applies speed, frequency, and reliability in a more nuanced way to address customer travel needs.

The recommendations coming out of NextGen are expected to focus on the following travel markets to better meet the customer needs in LA County:
1) Metro should continue to serve the commute market, usually longer distance trips during weekday peak hours to major employment centers. This market requires faster on board travel times with more direct service.
2) Metro should restructure to better serve the shorter distance, non-commute market which accounts for nearly 50% of total LA County trips. This market requires a high frequency network of routes to reduce wait and transfer times throughout the late morning, midday into the evening, and on weekends when most workers, residents and visitors need access to local jobs, service, shopping, and regional attractions.
3) Areas and times of day that does not have the demand for frequent fixed route service, but require basic mobility for many residents can be better served with flexible or on demand services.

The areas for improvement within these three travel markets will be selected based on a data driven analysis and extensive public outreach. Staff will return in April 2019 with recommendations on service concepts for consideration by the board.

Annual Customer Service and Experience Plan
Initiative 2.3 of Metro's Vision 2028 Strategic Plan commits Metro to dedicating staff resources to oversee customer experience and developing a comprehensive approach for improving customer satisfaction. Vision 2028 goes on to describe the following specific initiatives:
- Develop a unifying vision and strategy for enhancing the customer's experience,

- Improve customer journey and touch points, and
- Use data analytics to benchmark and measure system performance in meeting customer satisfaction targets.

The response to parts (**C**) and (**D**) of Board motion 38.1 will be directly aligned with Initiative 2.3 so that its execution will help to accomplish Vision 2028 Goal 2, "Deliver outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system."

The Customer Service and Experience Plan (Plan) will cover the components described below that were requested in Board motion 38.1. It should be noted that this Plan is part of a continuous improvement process, and as such, it is a work in progress. This Board report marks the beginning of what staff anticipates to be a comprehensive and impactful customer experience strategy as promised in the Vision 2028 plan.

Key Performance Indicators
Metro staff will follow the principles of continuous process improvement to establish a comprehensive customer service and experience practice throughout the organization. As part of the Plan, staff have developed an initial list of customer experience key performance indicators (KPIs; Attachment C) that will improve customer touch points for Metro's services. Starting with this preliminary list, staff will consult a number of additional sources, including results from our most recent Customer Satisfaction Survey and examples from some of the highest performing transit agencies and operators in the world (MTR Corporation, Singapore Land Transport Authority, Japan Railway Company, and Transport for London) to further expand and develop these metrics. High-level categories include convenience, ease-of-use, comfort, security, and customer care. Each category will expand into additional subcategories, providing further detail on metrics that will address customer pain points.

Status of Customer Service & Experience Projects
Per Motion 38.1, the Plan will include the status, accomplishments, objectives and challenges of Customer Service and Experience projects, beginning with the CEO Ridership Initiatives that were introduced to the Board in May 2018. The first progress report for the CEO Ridership Initiatives is provided in Attachment D to this report. Additional projects that address customer experience will be added as they are launched and removed when complete.

Transit Service Marketing and Communications
Similar to the status of the customer experience projects, the Plan will also address efforts to improve communications with customers on any number of topics that will make customer trips easier, including new services, closures, schedules, etc.Metro staff will strive to identify new ways to engage customers to improve the transit system and services for everyone.

Customer Experience Culture
The Plan will also address staff resources and training needed to accomplish the customer experience goals as described in both the Board Motion 38.1 and Vision 2028. As a first step, Metro staff are developing the roles and responsibilities for a Customer Experience Strategist position to lead and manage the customer experience program agency-wide. This will include the oversight of

the Plan elements. This position is expected to report to the CEO's office to ensure the appropriate level of integration across all Metro departments.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

Approval of this item will have a positive impact on the safety of our customers and employees.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

All costs relative to Metro Customer Experience Plans, project and programs will be approved during the regular budget process and Department project managers will be responsible for budgeting any future Customer Experience projects and programs.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Approval of this recommendation supports the following Metro Strategic Plan Goal: 2) Deliver outstanding trip experience for all users of the transportation system.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will provide an update to the Board in FY19 Q4 to provide more detail on the Customer Service and Experience Plan. The Plan will provide the framework for the performance metrics, staffing, budget, and status updates for the customer experience initiatives outlined in motion 38.1 and Metro Vision 2028.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Motion 38.1 - NextGen Bus Study Service Parameters
Attachment B - NextGen Update: Transit Competitiveness and Market Potential; File ID: 2018-0555
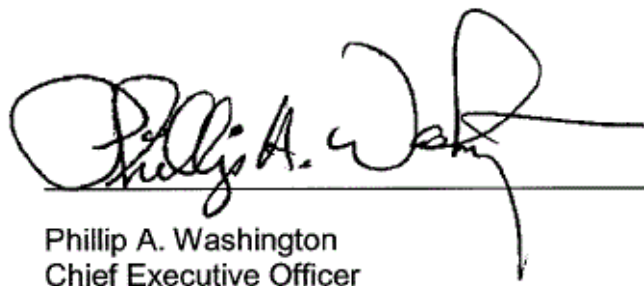Attachment C - Customer Experience Key Performance Indicators
Attachment D - CEO Ridership Initiatives Progress Report, July 1, 2018-January 31, 2019

Prepared by: Nadine Lee, Interim Chief of Staff, (213) 922-7950
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Phillip A. Washington
Chief Executive Officer

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Board Report

Los Angeles County
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Los Angeles, CA

File #: 2018-0614, **File Type:** Motion / Motion Response   **Agenda Number:**

REGULAR BOARD MEETING
JUNE 28, 2018

Motion by:

GARCETTI, KUEHL, BONIN AND GARCIA
AS AMENDED BY BARGER

Related to Item 38: **NEXTGEN BUS STUDY SERVICE PARAMETERS**

MTA should strive to deliver the best customer experience of any public transit provider in America.

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SUBJECT: MOTION BY GARCETTI, KUEHL, BONIN AND GARCIA

NEXTGEN BUS STUDY SERVICE PARAMETERS

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E.   Report back to the Operations Committee on all the above in 120 days.

BARGER AMENDMENT: continue to seek input and feedback on priorities from NextGen working groups and relevant community stakeholders.

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Board Report

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File #: 2018-0555, **File Type:** Informational Report   **Agenda Number:** 36.

OPERATIONS, SAFETY AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE
EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 18, 2018

SUBJECT: NEXTGEN UPDATE: TRANSIT COMPETITIVENESS AND MARKET POTENTIAL

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE an update on NextGen transit competitiveness and market potential information.

ISSUE

On June 28, 2018, the Board of Directors approved Motion 38.1 in relation to Item 38: NextGen Bus Study Service Parameters. The Motion directed the NextGen Bus Study to endorse travel speed, service frequency, and system reliability as the highest priority service parameters to guide the work of the project. With these service parameters defined, this report responds with detailed findings on where these service parameters fit as Metro seeks to prioritize service concepts in the next phase of the project.

BACKGROUND

The goal of the NextGen Bus Study is to design a new bus network that is more relevant, reflective of, and attractive to the residents of LA County. Since 2014, Metro has seen a decline in bus ridership around 20%. This is consistent with many transit agencies across the nation. There are a number of potential explanations for the ridership decline, so it is important to fully understand these issues, particularly as it relates to the diverse needs of LA County.

While Metro's bus network carries over 70% of combined Metro bus and rail ridership, the bus network has not seen major changes in over 25 years. Today, there are more people, more places to go, and more ways to get there. As a result, Metro's bus network has fallen out of alignment with the way people need to travel today.

DISCUSSION

The NextGen Bus Study seeks to improve the bus network for current, former and potential customers. While it is critical to examine the data, it is important to engage with the community and

understand their preferences. As a result, the project has completed a robust campaign of outreach to date.

- 113,000 Multi-lingual Take Ones
- 350,000 Database Contacts
- 30+ Community Based Organization, Faith-Based & Community Events/Presentations
- 25+ Regional Service Council Presentations
- 18+ Community Pop-Up Events
- 10 Rap Sessions with Bus Divisions
- 3 Working Group Meetings
- 3 Customer Care Focus Group Sessions
- 2 Da Vinci High School Student Workshops
- 2 Telephone Town Halls
- 2 Technical Advisory Committee Meetings
- 2 Internal Working Group Meetings

The NextGen Bus Study has determined that there are four types of riders.

- 7% Frequent (ride 3-4 times per week)

- 22% Occasional (ride 2-3 times per month)

- 55% Infrequent (ride 1-2 times per year)

- 16% Non-Rider

While the number of frequent riders only accounts for 7% of all LA County residents, frequent riders represent 80% of all Metro bus boardings. However, the frequent rider base has been declining, as there are a number of publicized factors for this, including affordable car loans, more reliable cars, ease of getting a driver's license, rideshare expansion, and displacement. This means that every frequent rider lost accounts for 2-3 times loss in ridership. The question becomes whether it is prudent to continue prioritizing a shrinking ridership base or explore emerging markets which may have different travel preferences.

According to the Metro Customer Survey conducted in 2017, 31% of current riders stated that their main reason for riding for convenience. Some other positive attributes included not wanting to drive in traffic, good for the environment, and cheaper than parking. Primary improvements desired among current riders were more frequent and reliable service. When compared with Non-Riders, their main reason for not riding is because the bus is too slow from traffic and too many transfers. However, both current riders and non-riders agree that the most important service parameters Metro should focus on are being fast, frequent and reliable. This is consistent with the service parameters outlined in Motion 40.1.

With existing levels of service, Metro cannot be fast, frequent and reliable along every corridor, all day and everyday. Therefore, policy choices must be made to prioritize where and when it makes sense to implement these parameters.

While many people perceive the Metro bus network to not go where people want to travel, the Metro system in fact covers 85% of all trips in LA County. In many cases, however, these trips are not time competitive with other options. The study examined transit speed competitiveness by using a combination of TAP data and cell phone, location-based data to learn where and when people wanted to travel for both transit and non-transit trips. These trips were then calculated through trip planners to compare travel times and establish which markets are compatible for transit. The analysis revealed that transit can be competitive with other trips so long as it does not take more than twice as long as driving.

A transit journey generally consists of two components, the walk/wait time at the bus stop, then the on-board time as the bus is traveling. These two factors make up total transit travel time. For short trips, the walk/wait time is more critical to riders, as studies show the perception of wait time can be 2 -3 times the actual time. For longer trips, the on-board time becomes more critical, as riders spend the majority of time traveling on the bus as opposed to waiting at a bus stop. This reveals that to be competitive for short trips, frequency is critical for minimizing the walk/wait time. To be competitive for long trips, travel speed is critical for minimizing the on-board time. Travel speed can be improved by a number of strategies, including dedicated bus lanes, transit signal priority, and bus stop consolidation.

Today, Metro captures the greatest market share on long distance riders traveling over 10 miles. However, the overall market for long distance trips, whether transit or non-transit, represents only 16% of total trips taken in LA County. The largest amount of total trips are within a shorter distance of 1-5 miles, representing 46% of total trips taken in LA County. If Metro can match it's transit share of this 1-5 mile segment with the long distance segment, bus ridership would increase by 500,000 trips.

In order to address the large, short distance trip market, Metro must understand when, where and why these trips generally occur. Short trips serve a variety of purposes, including workers traveling to a local business, single mothers running errands with children, and people traveling for dining or entertainment. These trips all share a similar attribute that the travel occurs primarily during the midday and evening period. This is in contrast to the long distance, commute trips which tend to be during the morning and evening rush hour, focused on major employment centers. As a result, while Metro service currently serves the morning and evening commute trips well, there are missed opportunities for midday and late evening travel when many short distance, non-commute trips are being made.

In summary, there are two areas where Metro should focus on to better meet the needs of LA County travel. First, Metro should build on its success of long distance, commute trips by improving on-board travel times. Second, Metro should enter the short distance, non-commute market where nearly 50% of total LA County trips are made by improving frequencies to reduce wait time at bus stops. These areas for improvement will be selected based on a data driven analysis and extensive public outreach.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

The recommended action of improving on-board travel times and service frequencies will enhance Metro's ability to provide service that is safe and reliable.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Approval of this recommendation supports the following Metro Strategic Plan Goals: Provide high-quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling. Deliver outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system. Enhance communities and lives through mobility and access to opportunity. Provide responsive, accountable, and trustworthy governance within the Metro organization. This project will improve safety, service, and reliability in an effort to provide a world-class transportation system that enhances quality of life for all who live, work, and play within LA County.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The fulfilment of this project could be accomplished through maintaining the existing bus network. For this project, staff does not recommend this approach. Staff asserts that there are distinct advantages to Metro in better responding to meet the needs of where, when and why people travel in LA County today. As a result, Metro expects bus ridership to improve both in quantity and quality.
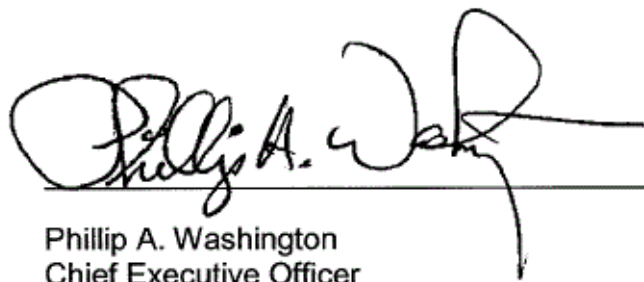
NEXT STEPS

Staff will continue working with the NextGen Working Group to prioritize service concepts, then return to the Board in January 2019 with a recommendation on service concepts. If approved, staff will begin translating service concepts into line-by-line improvements for service changes starting in December 2019 and continuing through June 2020.

ATTACHMENTS
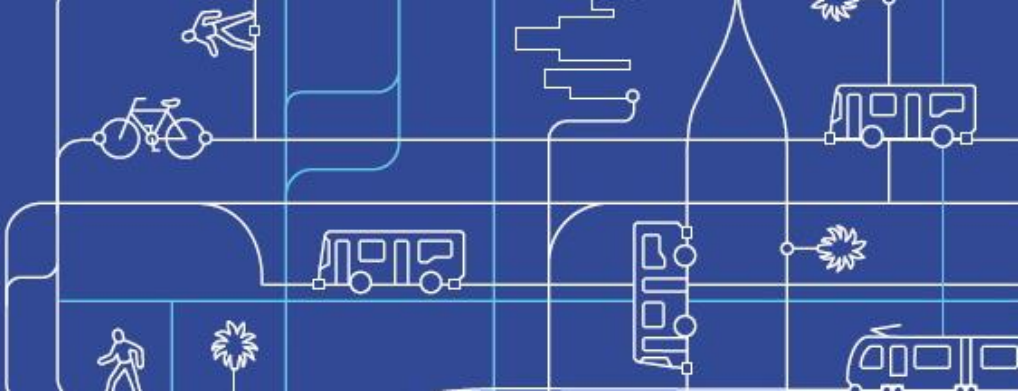Attachment A - NextGen FAQ

Prepared by: Stephen Tu, Sr. Manager, Operations, (213) 418-3005
        Conan Cheung, Sr. Executive Officer, Operations, (213) 418-3034

Reviewed by: James T. Gallagher, Chief Operations Officer, (213) 418-3108

Phillip A. Washington
Chief Executive Officer

NextGen Bus Study: Frequently Asked Questions

OVERVIEW

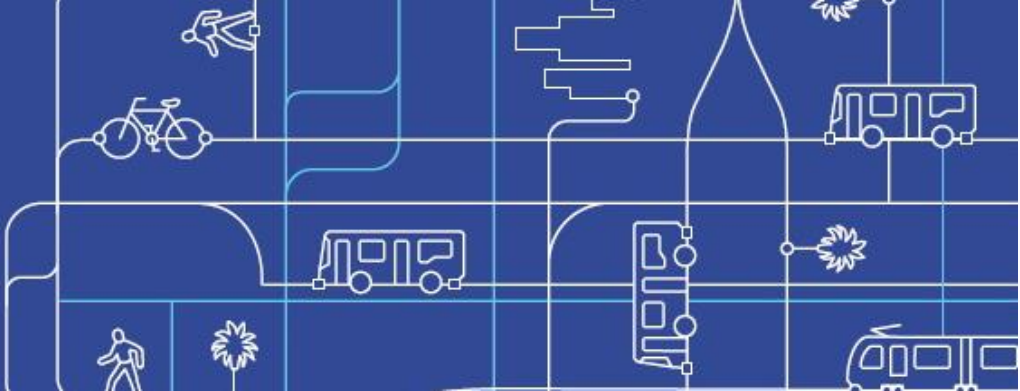| 1) What is the NextGen Bus Study? |
|---|
| Metro has set out to design a new bus network that is more relevant, reflective of, and attractive to the residents of LA County. We believe this redesigned network will improve service to current riders, attract a new generation of users and win back past customers. The NextGen Bus Study consists of four steps. At each stage, the public will be encouraged to actively participate and provide informative and valuable input. |
| 2) Why is Metro doing this now? |
| Simply put, the bus network in LA County carries over 70% of Metro customers but has not had a major overhaul in 25 years. Since that time, our county has evolved dramatically. Over a million residents have been added, transforming many local communities with new travel patterns. The Metro Rail system was just beginning 25 years ago, but now LA County has 105 miles of service and service will continue to grow steadily over the next 25 years. In addition, with new transportation options like ride hailing apps and bike share, it is important that our bus system integrates with all the ways Angelinos travel today, with flexibility built in for the future. |
| 3) When is the NextGen Bus Study happening? |
| The NextGen Bus Study began in Spring 2018 and is estimated to take 18 months to be completed. |
| 4) When will the NextGen Bus Service Plan be implemented? |
| Bus service changes will be implemented starting in Fall 2019. |
| 5) Will the NextGen Bus Study result in minor adjustments to the current bus network or truly redesign the system with a "clean slate approach"? |
| The goal of the NextGen Bus Study is to create an attractive and competitive world-class bus system. To achieve this goal, all aspects of Metro bus service are on the table for study, including speed, distance, frequency, time of day, reliability as well as quality of service and safety. Some of the most heavily traveled lines, e.g. Vermont Ave., Western Ave., Ventura Blvd., may not see major changes, but may be modified to provide better connections to other routes and services. Public input along with the technical evaluation of travel data will inform the extent of the changes. |

COORDINATION WITH OTHER STUDIES/SERVICE PROVIDERS

6) How is the NextGen Bus Study integrating with Metro's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Vision and Principles Study?

The BRT Vision and Principles Study will establish and build consensus on a clear vision, goals and objectives for the BRT system and develop guidance on the design of the BRT network. It will also facilitate the identification and prioritization of future BRT candidate corridors. The NextGen Bus Study will coordinate and share data with the BRT study team in order to improve bus speeds and maximize Metro's investment in future BRT corridors. Data to be shared includes travel demand data, identification of congested corridors, and auto vs. transit travel time ratios for major travel corridors, which will assist the BRT study with the identification and prioritization of the first decade Measure M BRT project, which has an expected opening date of FY 2022-2024. In addition, the NextGen Bus Study will develop short term recommendations for "hot spot" speed and reliability improvements on major transit corridors based on guidelines, which will further help guide BRT investment.

7) How is the NextGen Bus Study integrating with future Metro Rail/BRT capital projects?

The NextGen Bus Study is focusing on a 10-year horizon (2030). Therefore, all rail lines under construction, including Crenshaw/LAX, Regional Connector, and Westside Purple Line Extension Phase 1, 2, 3, are assumed as part of the existing transit infrastructure. In addition, future projects currently in the planning stage and expected to be under construction within the next 10 years will be considered in route planning and scheduling decisions, including the East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor, Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project, West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor, Gold Line Foothill Extension Phase 2B to Claremont, Green Line Torrance Extension, Vermont Corridor BRT, North Hollywood to Pasadena Transit Corridor BRT, and North San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor BRT.

8) How is the NextGen Bus Study integrating with the MicroTransit Pilot Project and Mobility on Demand Grant Program?

The Mobility on Demand Program and the MicroTransit Pilot Projects will be integrated into the network once they have been implemented. The NextGen Bus Study will account for these during the study process.

9) Will bus service provided by the LA County municipal transit operators also be included in the NextGen Bus Study?

Through the NextGen Bus Study, we are taking a holistic approach to the LA County bus system that does not look at Metro alone but instead leverages all resources, including municipal operators.

10) How is the Long Range Transportation Plan integrating the NextGen Bus Study in its update process?

The NextGen Bus Study and the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) are already integrating in terms of coordinated public outreach efforts and travel demand data sharing. The LRTP has many components, but the portion on future bus system operations will be structured around the findings and outcomes from the NextGen Bus Study, along with other Metro policies and programs. This includes a thorough examination of how the system can best function in future decades based on what NextGen tells us about Metro's current system, combined with other forecasts about future regional growth, and how to ensure the bus infrastructure is funded and maintained in a constant state of good repair. This is a sequential coordination with each phase informing the next.

FUNDING/RESOURCES

11) Will the NextGen Bus Service Plan be constrained to the 7 million service hours currently available?

The initial assumption of the NextGen Bus Study is to develop a service plan within the range of 7 million service hours, plus or minus 10 percent (6.3 million to 7.7 million hours). However, this does not preclude Metro from developing a service plan that exceeds this range should the benefits justify any tradeoffs to other Metro projects and programs.

12) How will fares be affected?

The NextGen Bus Study is a study of the bus system; fares are not being considered as part of this effort.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT & COMMUNITY ISSUES

**13) Will there be further opportunities for public input on the NextGen Bus Study?**

Yes. Public engagement is critical to the success of the NextGen Bus Study and Metro is actively soliciting input. Here are some of the current and upcoming opportunities:

- Help Metro rank and prioritize bus service characteristics with our online engagement tool: https://nextgen.metroquest.com.
- Attend a public meeting in November 2018 - visit www.metro.net/nextgen for more details.
- Email your thoughts or request a presentation for your organization by contacting Robert Cálix at nextgen@metro.net.

NEXTGEN
Bus Study

Transit Competitiveness and Market Potential

Operations, Safety, and
Customer Experience Committee
Executive Management Committee
10.18.18

Metro®
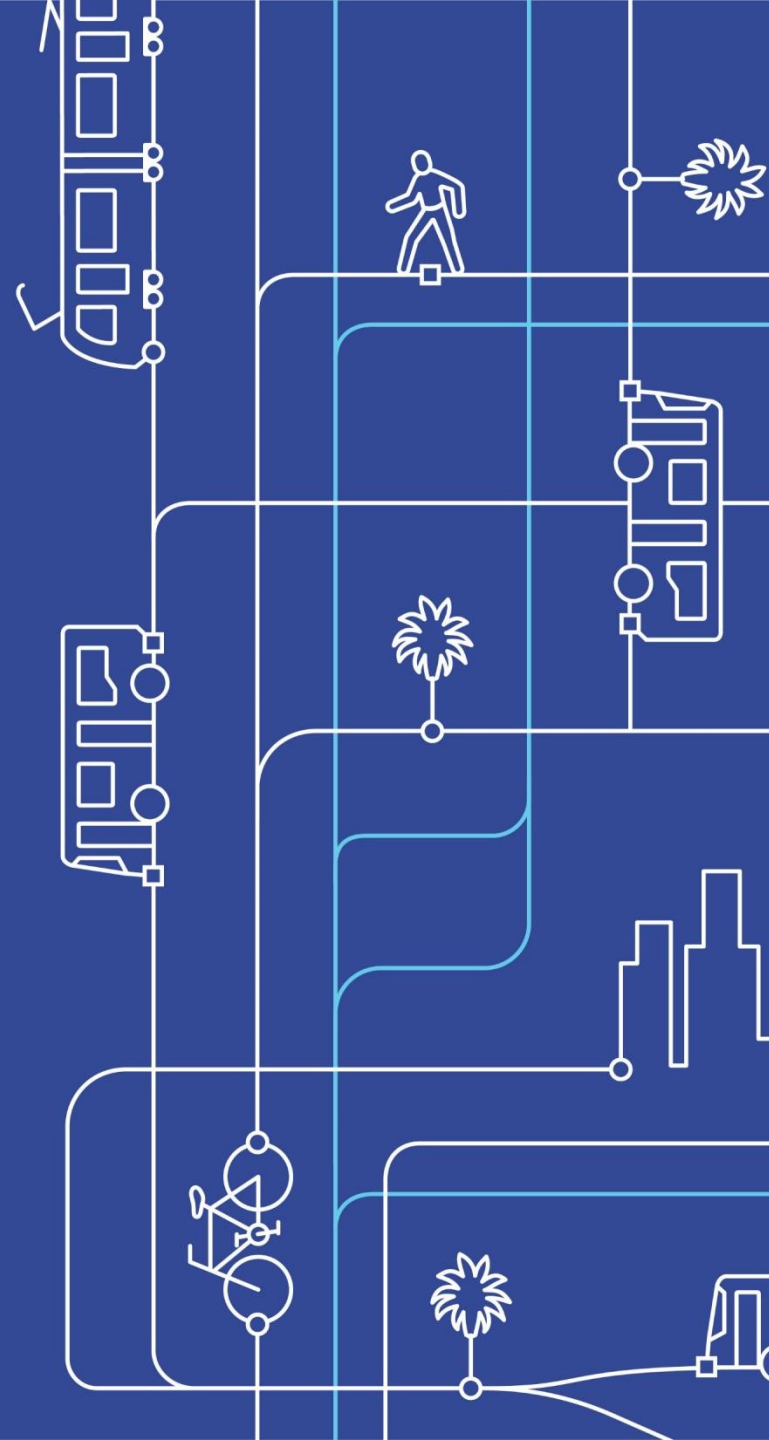
Study Process

| SPRING/SUMMER 2018	FALL 2018/WINTER 2019	SPRING/SUMMER 2019	FALL 2019/WINTER 2020
Step 1	**Step 2**	**Step 3**	**Step 4**
Market Demand and Travel Patterns, Existing Service Evaluation	Policy Choices for Service (or Market) Priorities, Service Characteristics, and Network Design	Service Design Guidelines and Route/Schedule Changes	Implementation and Marketing
Project awareness and listening to what the market tells us about how we travel, evaluate how existing bus service relates to the needs of the rider.	Policies to develop potential bus service priorities to better meet the needs of the rider.	Redesign new routes and schedules based on guidelines and parameters reflecting the adopted Policy Choices.	Implement new routes and schedules that reflect the way people travel today. Market the new services to existing, former, and non-riders through education and information sharing tools.

Continuous public engagement ⟶
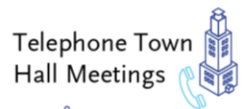
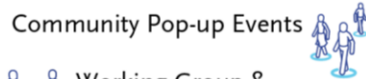**Step 1**
Telephone Town Hall Meetings

Community Pop-up Events
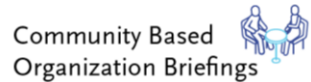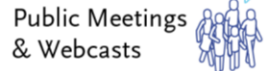
Community Based Organization Briefings

Service Council/Board Briefings

Step 2
Community Pop-up Events

Working Group & Stakeholder Briefings

Public Meetings & Webcasts

Service Council/Board Briefings

Metro Board Approval

Step 3
Telephone Town Hall Meetings

Muni Operators & Local Jurisdictions Collaboration

Formal Public Hearings

Service Council/Board Briefings

Step 4
Marketing & Messaging

Community Pop-up Events

Public Meetings & Webcasts

Service Council/Board Briefings
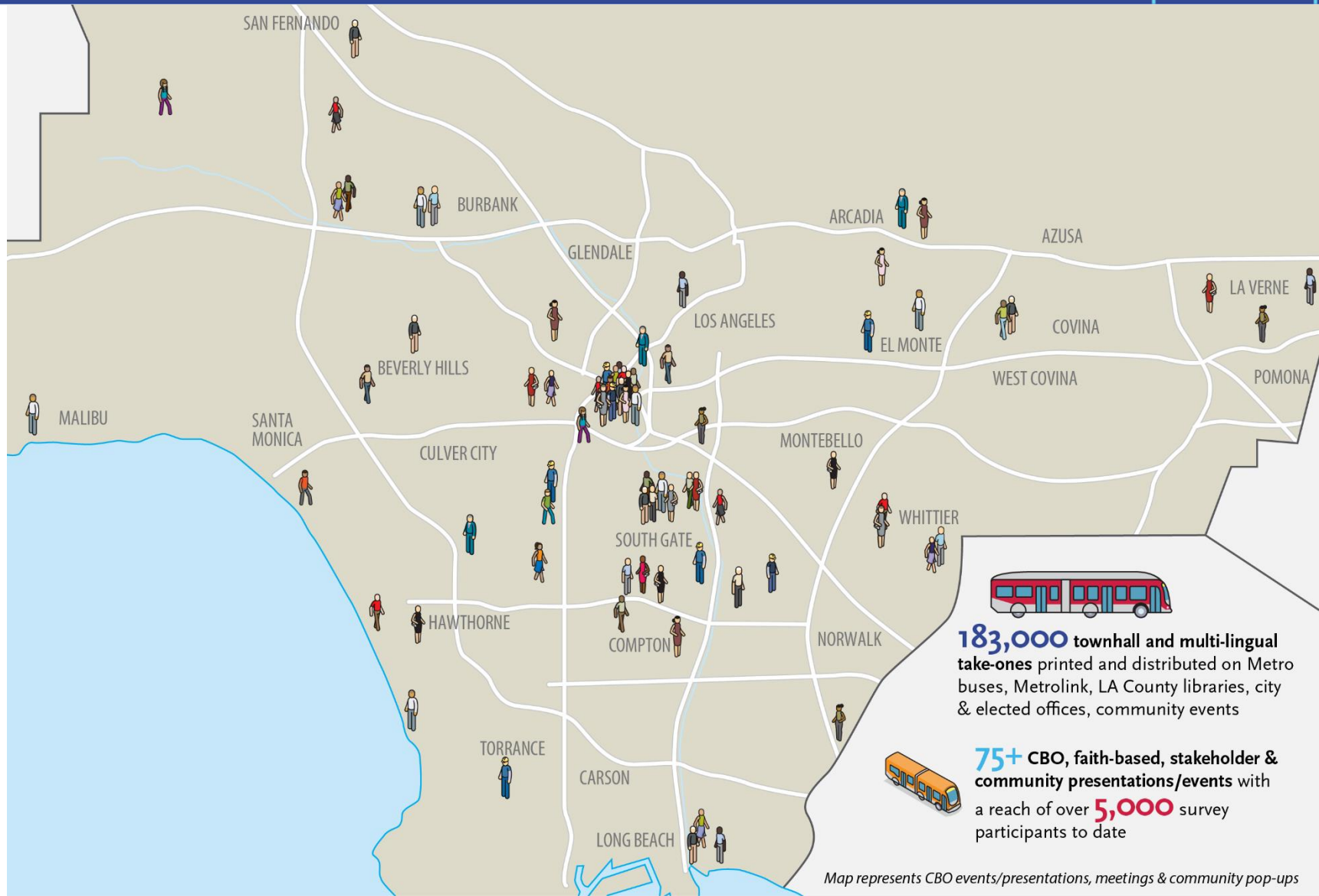
Metro Service Council/ Board Approval

Continuous online engagement tools: questionnaire, interactive survey and map ⟶
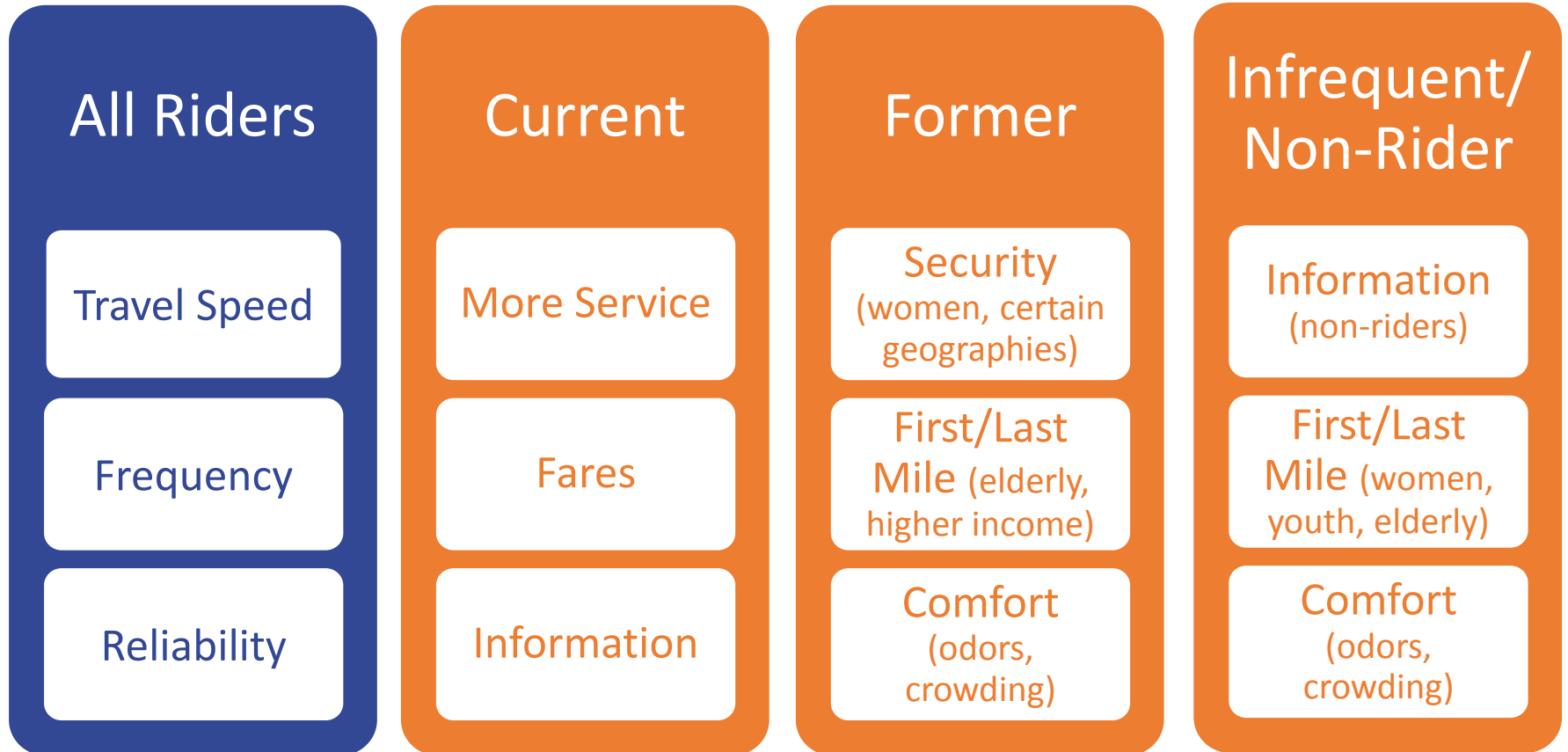
Stakeholder Engagement

SAN FERNANDO

BURBANK

GLENDALE

ARCADIA

AZUSA

LA VERNE

LOS ANGELES

COVINA

EL MONTE

POMONA

BEVERLY HILLS

WEST COVINA

MALIBU

SANTA MONICA

CULVER CITY

MONTEBELLO

WHITTIER

SOUTH GATE

HAWTHORNE

COMPTON

NORWALK

TORRANCE

CARSON

LONG BEACH

183,000 townhall and multi-lingual take-ones printed and distributed on Metro buses, Metrolink, LA County libraries, city & elected offices, community events

75+ CBO, faith-based, stakeholder & community presentations/events with a reach of over **5,000** survey participants to date

Map represents CBO events/presentations, meetings & community pop-ups

2

Service Parameters

All Riders	Current	Former	Infrequent/ Non-Rider
Travel Speed	More Service	Security (women, certain geographies)	Information (non-riders)
Frequency	Fares	First/Last Mile (elderly, higher income)	First/Last Mile (women, youth, elderly)
Reliability	Information	Comfort (odors, crowding)	Comfort (odors, crowding)

Transit Service Coverage

Transit is accessible to 85% of all trips made in the region.

Metro Transit Lines by Tier

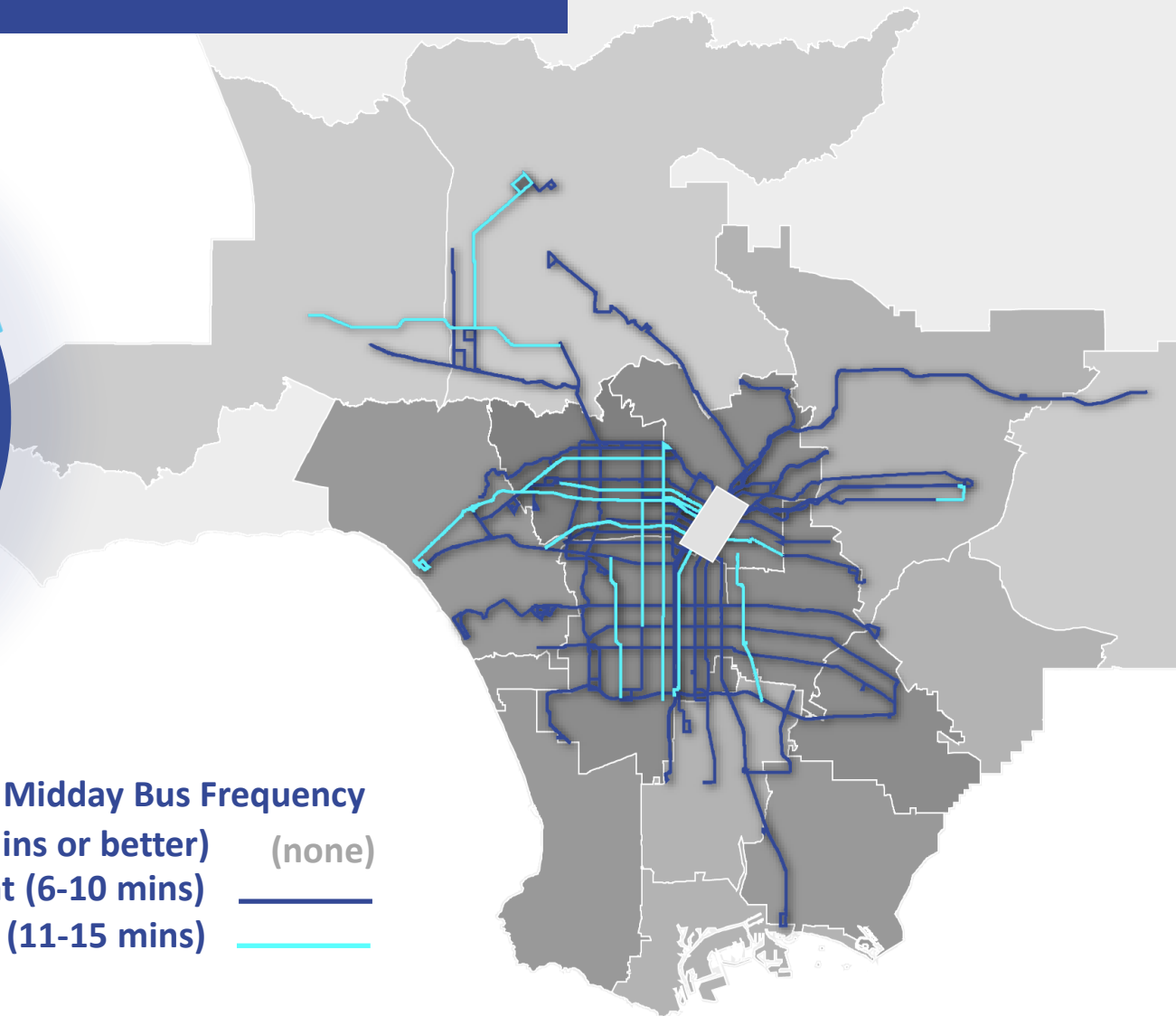|	
Express	⎯⎯
Rapid	⎯⎯
Local	⎯⎯
Limited	⎯⎯
Shuttles	⎯⎯
Busway	⎯⎯
Muni (non-Metro service)	⎯⎯

Transit Service Density

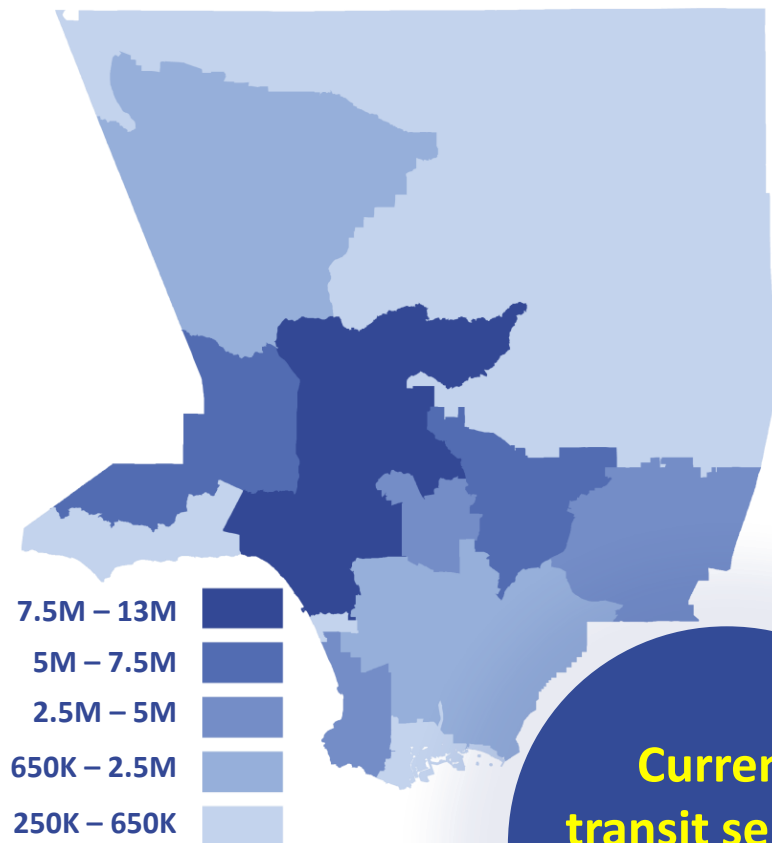All day frequent service is concentrated in Central LA County

Midday Bus Frequency
Super Frequent (5 mins or better) — (none)
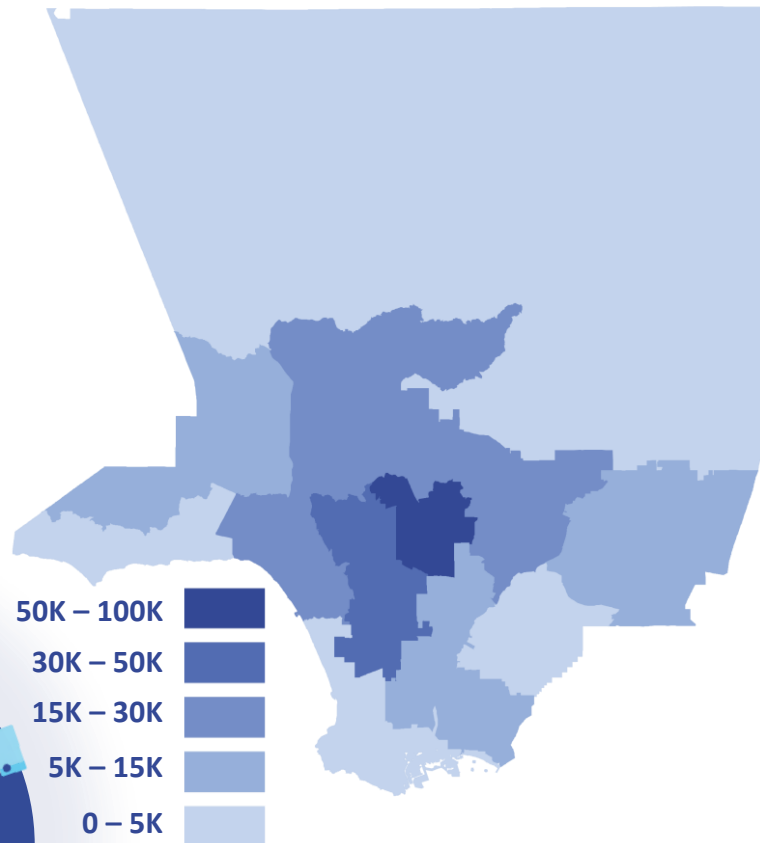Very Frequent (6-10 mins) — ————
Frequent (11-15 mins) — ————

5

Trip Origins Total vs Transit Trips

**All Trip Origins (cell phone data)**

Transit Origins (TAP data)

7.5M – 13M
5M – 7.5M
2.5M – 5M
650K – 2.5M
250K – 650K

50K – 100K
30K – 50K
15K – 30K
5K – 15K
0 – 5K

Current transit service is not always competitive

...ta - Metro and Municipal Operators & LBS Data (July through October, 2017)

Competitiveness of Relative Travel Times

Travel Time Comparison with Auto

Transit Market Share

Transit is most competitive when no more than 2x slower than auto
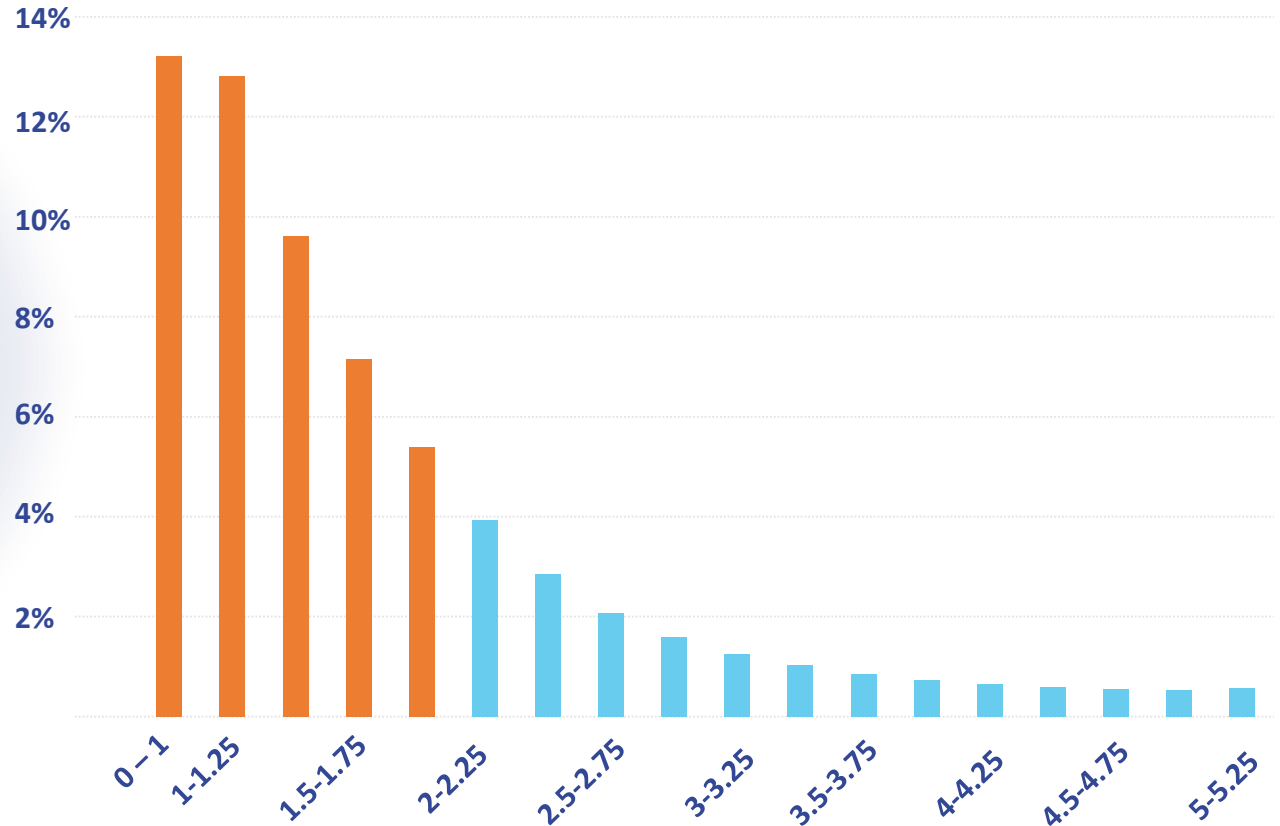
Transit to Drive Time Ratio

Understanding Trip Purposes

Commute Trips

Travel from home to a regular destination at an employment center during peak hours

Work Trips

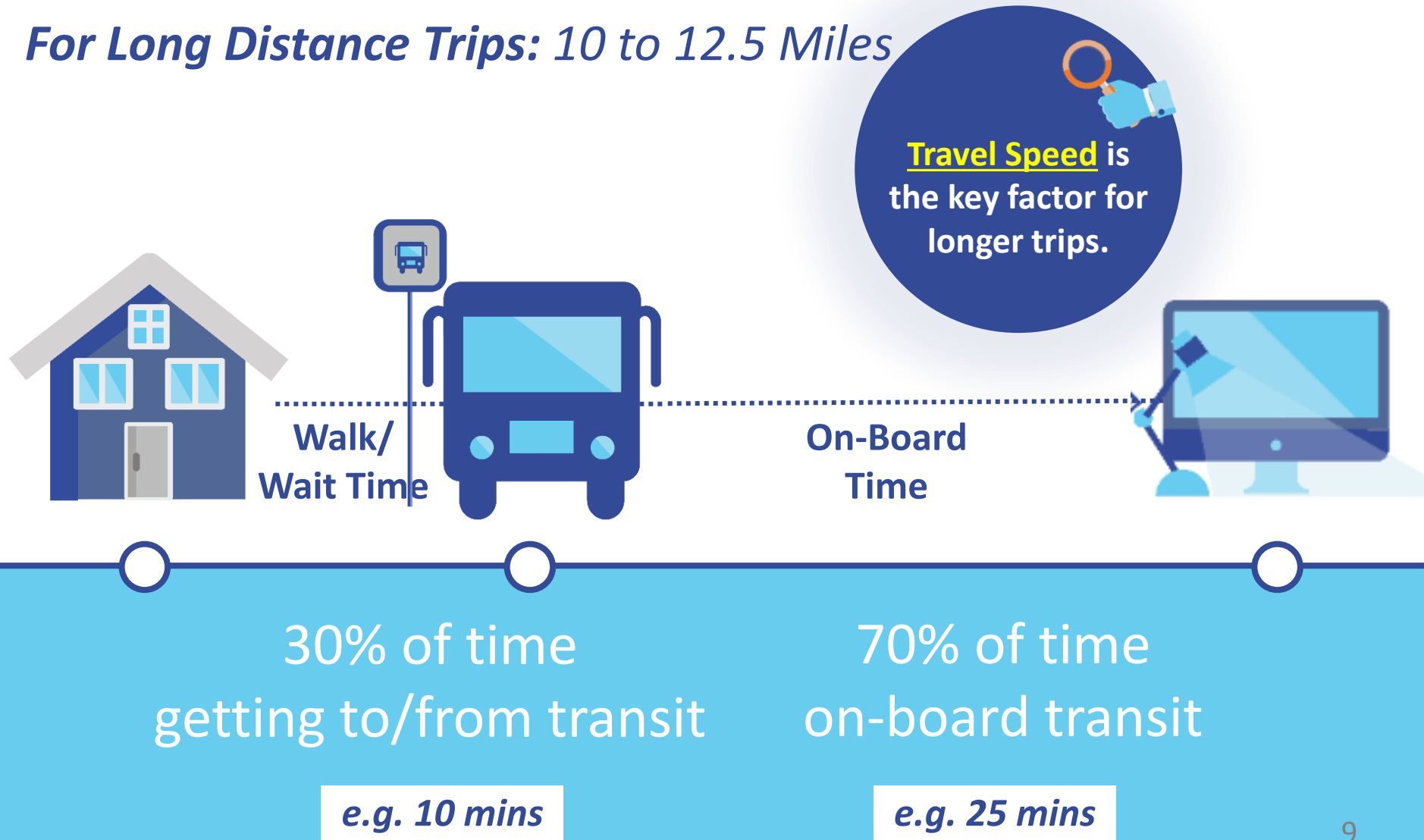Travel from home to a regular destination nearby anytime during the day or week

Other Trips

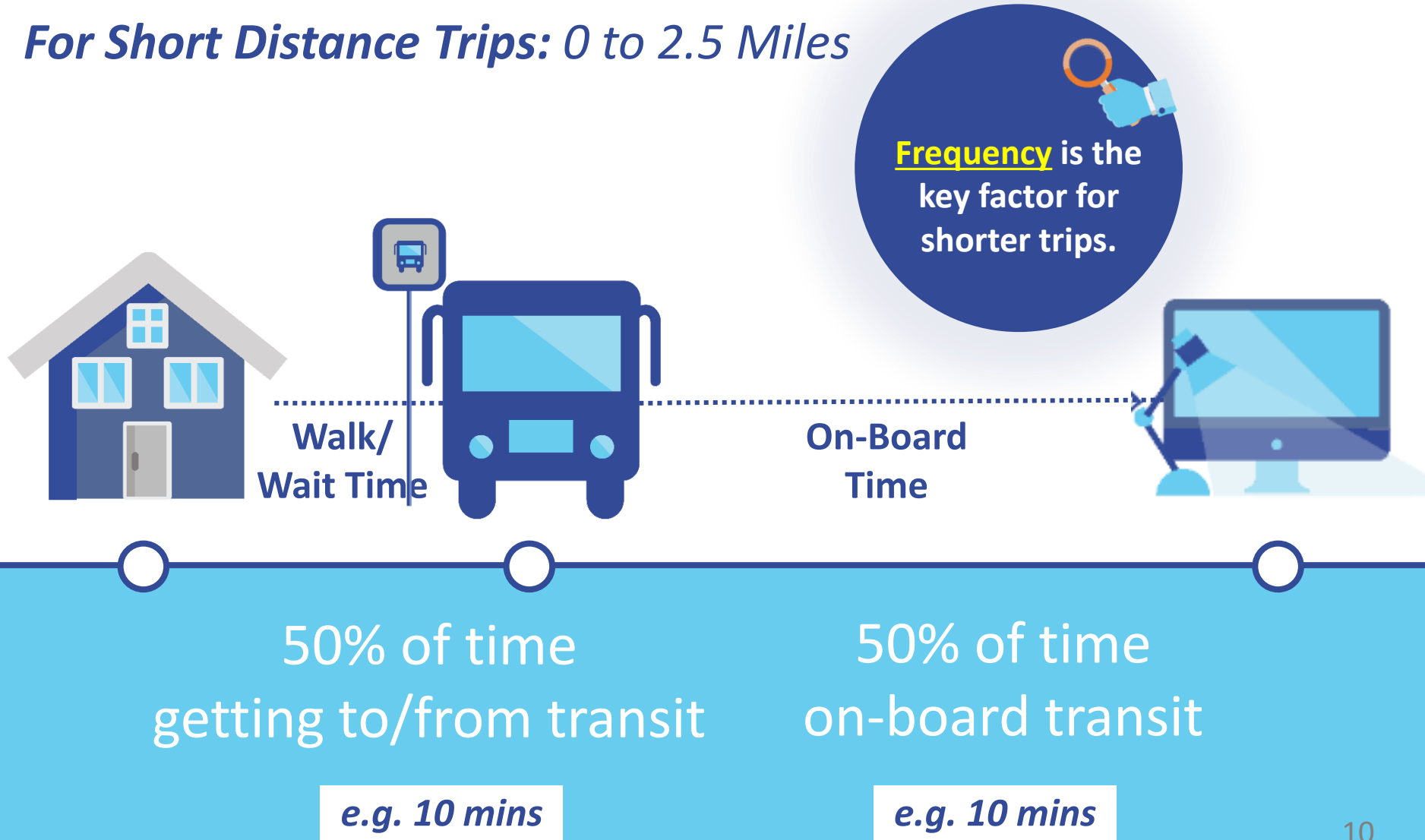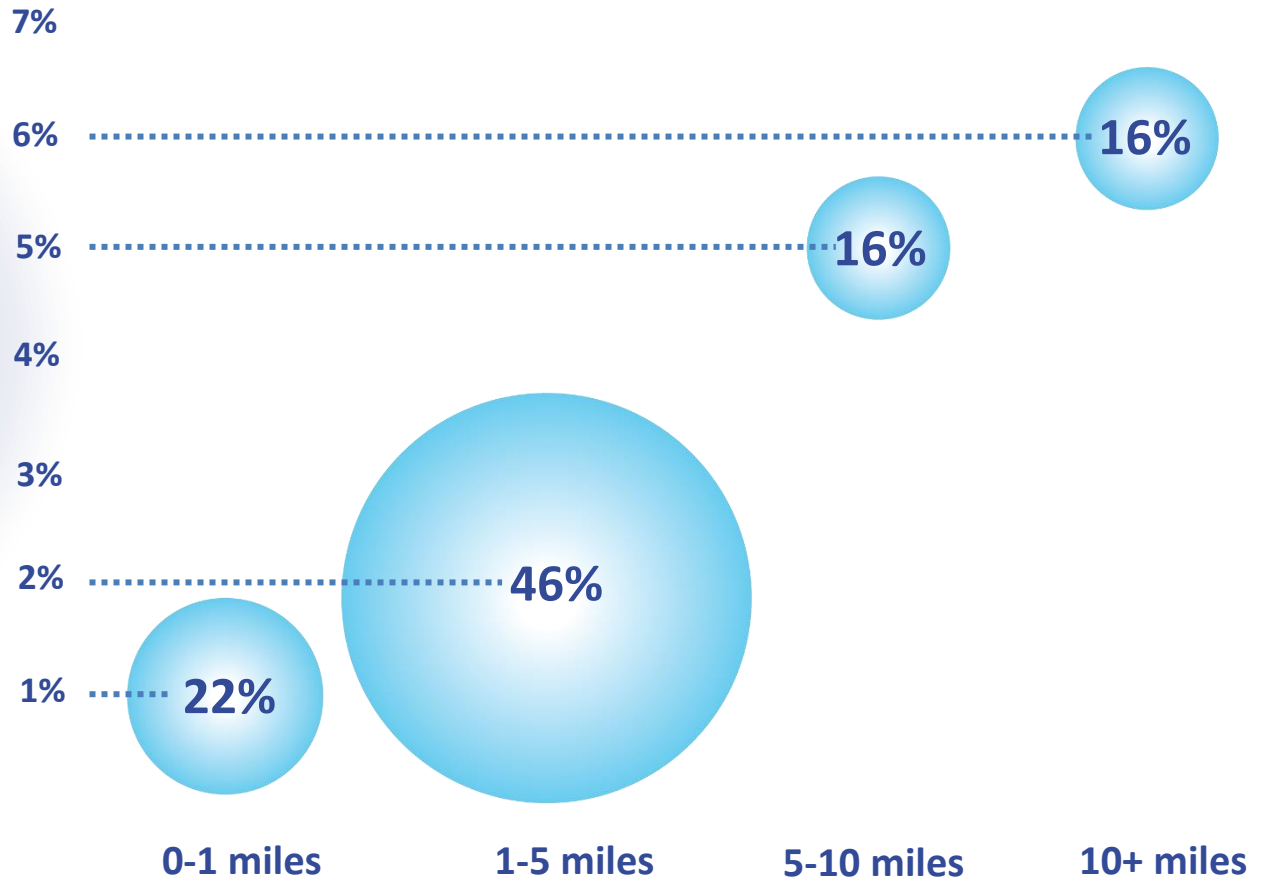Occasional travel from a changing origin to a changing destination

8

Competitiveness and Market Potential

Transit Market Share by Distance & Percent of Total Trips

Transit Market Share

Increasing our transit share of short distance trips to 6% means 500,000 new trips

% of total trips

7%

6% ··· **16%**

5% ··· **16%**

4%

3%

2% ······················· **46%**

1% ······ **22%**

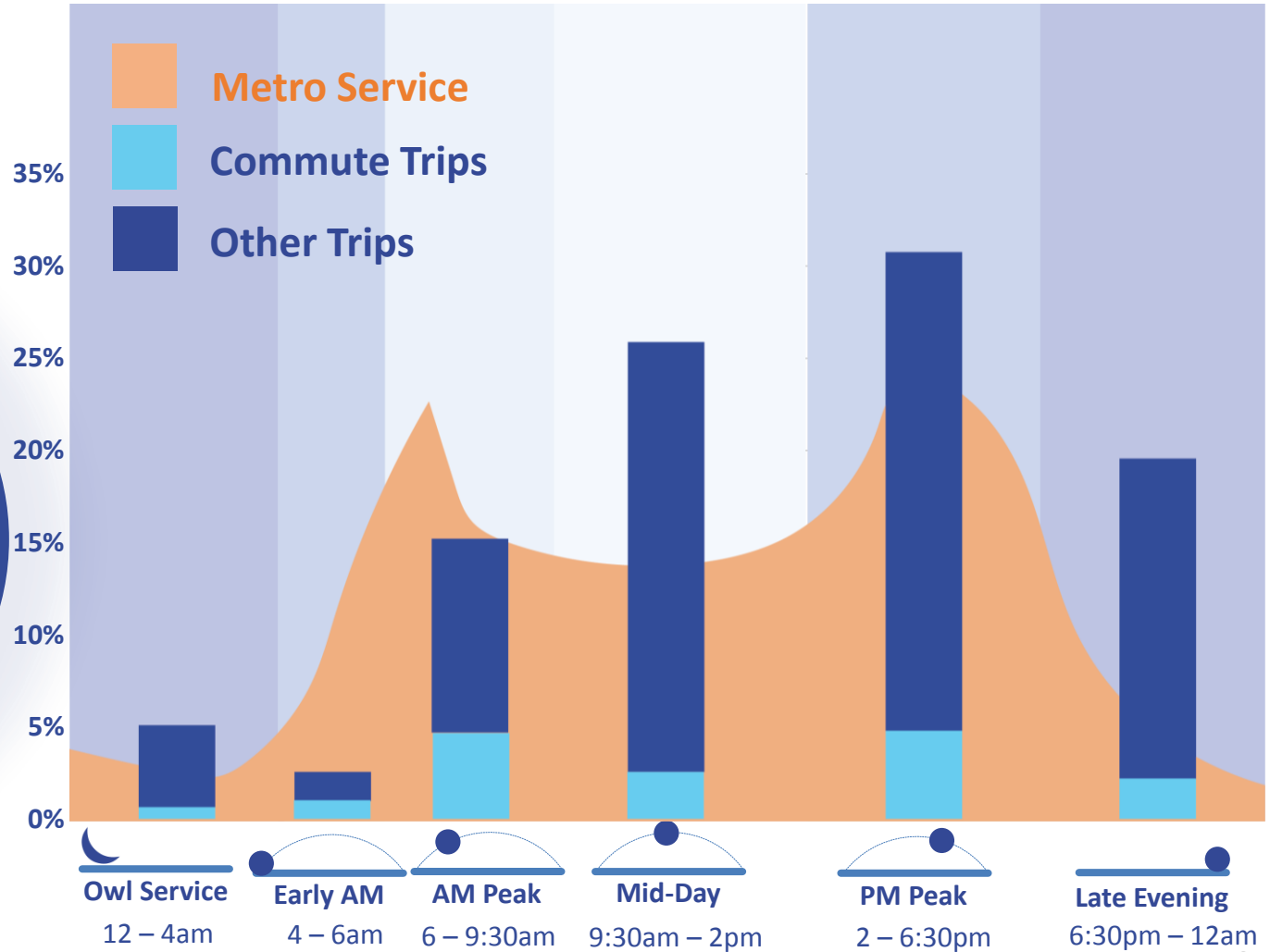0-1 miles   1-5 miles   5-10 miles   10+ miles

Trip Distance

11

More Frequent Service for Non-Commute Trips

Travel and Operations by Time of Day

Share of all trips and service by time of day

Current service does not match midday and evening travel demand.

Legend:
- Metro Service
- Commute Trips
- Other Trips

Y-axis: 0%, 5%, 10%, 15%, 20%, 25%, 30%, 35%

Owl Service	Early AM	AM Peak	Mid-Day	PM Peak	Late Evening
12 – 4am	4 – 6am	6 – 9:30am	9:30am – 2pm	2 – 6:30pm	6:30pm – 12am

Note: Bar chart shows data by time period while area plot shows hourly data

12

Market Priorities

Short Distance
Frequency

Long Distance
Speed

Commute Trips
Peak Hour

Other Trips
All Day

8% of all trips
5% transit market share

We are successful here and should continue to focus on this travel market.

We are not competing well in our biggest potential market and need to rethink our service to better capture short trips.

24% of all trips
**4% transit market share**

13

Next Steps on Service Concepts

Date	Stakeholder	Topic
Sept 2018 Sept 6, 2018 Oct 15, 2018	Service Councils Board Staff Metro Board	Transit Competitiveness & Market Potential
Sept 25, 2018 Jan 2019 Jan 2019	External Working Group Service Councils Public Workshops	Tradeoffs & Service Concepts
Jan-Feb, 2018 TBD	External Working Group Board Staff	Recommend Service Concepts (for Board approval)
Mar 2019	Metro Board	Draft Service Concepts (Policy Guidance)
Apr 2019	Metro Board	Final Service Concept* (Policy Guidance)

Ⓜ Metro

*Beginning of detailed route and schedule planning based on Service Concept
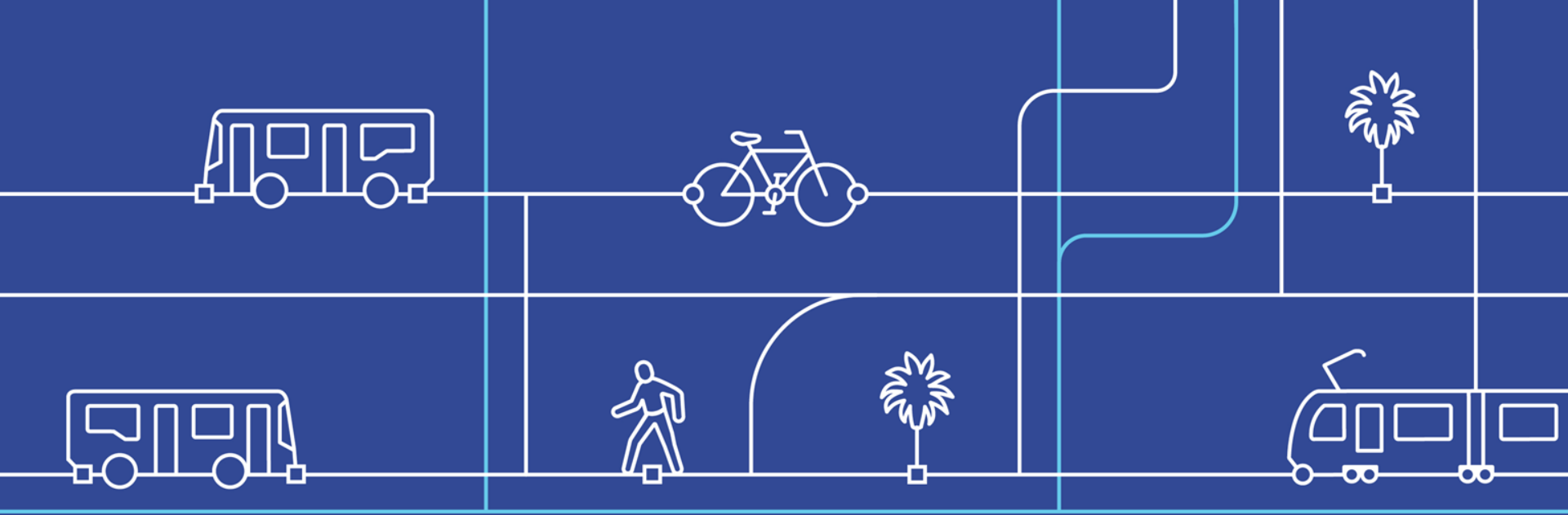
Thank You

Metro

Metro.net/nextgen

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	KPI	DESCRIPTION/EXAMPLES/NOTES
Convenience			
	Journey Experience		
		Availability for Journey	Frequency (Did the service run as planned?)
		Journey Time/On-board time	Passenger journeys on-time (Were there trip disruptions or delays?)
		Journey Time/Wait time	Vehicle punctuality (Did the vehicle show up on-time to origins and destinations?)
		Number of Transfers to complete journey	
Ease of Use			
	Transfers		
		Vertical Circulation	
		Reliability	How long are elevators/escalators down before repaired? How often are they down?
		Redundancy	Are there backup elevators/escalators in the same location?
		Wait time	How long is the average wait for a transfer? How accurate is the estimated wait time?
	Accessible Route		
		Availability	Are multiple routes available, and how convenient are they (especially when they involve vertical circulation)?
		Condition	Are there obstructions in the path of the accessible route?
	Wayfinding (Can include static and digital)		
		Availability	Is signage present and obvious?
		Accuracy	Does signage provide correct information?
		Clarity	Is signage easy to follow and understand?
	Trip Information		
		Availability	Is trip information in multiple forms easy to access, regardless of ability?
		Accuracy	Is trip information correct?
		Clarity	Is trip information easy to follow and understand?
		Timeliness	Does trip information reflect current conditions?
	Ticketing		
		TAP information	How easy to understand? How accurate and clear?
		Ticket Vending Machine reliability	Frequency of failure; How long before a TVM is repaired? Redundancy of machines
		TAP reliability	Transactions per failure
		Bus TAP vending	(Future) Availability and reliability
		Fare gate reliability	Transactions per failure; Time to repair
		Bus TAP reliability	Transactions per failure; Time to repair

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	KPI	DESCRIPTION/EXAMPLES/NOTES
Ease of Use (continued)			
	Passenger Information		
		on-vehicle (rail or bus) announcements	Is volume sufficient? Is information relevant and accurate? Is language easy to understand and clear?
		On-platform announcements	Is volume sufficient? Is information relevant and accurate? Is language easy to understand and clear?
Comfort			
	Cleanliness		Frequency of cleaning (of facility, equipment, etc.); standards of cleanliness
	Security		Perception of secure environment (visibility, security presence, responsiveness to security calls, etc.). Suggest putting Security under its own heading.
	Environmental Conditions		
		Lighting	How well lit is the facility or location? How long before a light is out before repair?
		Temperature	Ability to maintain temperature in controlled environment
		Ventilation	Air quality in controlled environment
		Shade	Availability of shelter from environmental conditions
		Seating	Availability and condition of seating for customers
	Passenger loading		Is overcrowding predictabe on the buses/trains at any particular time?
Customer Care			
	Customer-facing interactions		Total call time (actual customer interaction)
	Idle chats		Idle chat time (measures unproductive time for a call center representative)
	Call abandonment		Number of calls abandoned in given period (indicates wait times)

METRO RIDERSHIP INITIATIVES

PROGRESS REPORT

FY 2019 July 1, 2018 – January 31, 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Metro

INTRODUCTION

Los Angeles County has grown and evolved dramatically and so has transportation. Average system-wide weekday ridership continues to decline. Metro's current bus network carries over 70% of the 1.2 million customers that ride each day, but the system hasn't had a significant update in the last 25 years. The Metro Board has adopted the Vision 2028 Strategic Plan that puts the user experience aat the forefront of how we do business. Specifically, Goal 2 of Vision 2028 commits to:

"Deliver outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system. Metro will endeavor to improve trip experiences for all users of the transportation system, recognizing that a world-class system, serving a world-class metropolis, should be attractive, affordable, efficient, safe, convenient, and user-friendly. Specifically, Metro will take actions to improve security, ease of use, and access to accurate travel information on the region's transit systems and will work to improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points."

The Metro Strategic Plan (Vision 2028) focuses on the desired outcome of increased mobility in Los Angeles County, indicated in part by increased transit usage, or ridership. The CEO presented the Ridership Initiatives to the Metro's Ad Hoc Customer Experience Committee in June 2018. These initiatives are drawn directly from the following initiatives described in Vision 2028:

- Invest in a world class bus system
- Manage transportation demand effectively
- Improve Security for all Metro customers
- Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points
- Leverage transit investments to catalyze transit-oriented communities

IMPROVE BUS TRAVEL SPEEDS

Congested streets and highways degrade the quality and reliability of bus service. Speeding up the system addresses customer feedback that buses are too slow and inconvenient for their trip purposes. Running buses more efficiently can free up resources to be applied to more frequency, off-peak, or new services. By increasing speeds, Metro can improve the competitiveness of bus service, attract more riders, and increase opportunities to recoup and reallocate resources to improve service where and when they are needed.

Progress to Date:

NextGen Bus Study

- Step 1 of 4 completed consisting of an analysis of existing bus network and analysis of TAP and cell phone location-based data of travel patterns and market opportunities. NextGen staff is hosting 18 public workshops through the county to collect public input on how to improve the bus system, including bus routes, frequencies, and days and times of operations.
- Staff has completed four NextGen Working Group Meetings, over 100 community meetings, pop-up events, stakeholder briefings, and surveys.
- The project is currently in step 2 of 4 where staff are analyzing data and public input to establish a regional service concept and policy priorities for Board adoption in Spring 2019.
- Subsequent to this Board action, Metro staff will initiate step 3 of 4 to prepare bus line service changes across the entire bus system, after which the project team will seek public input on the proposed bus service changes.

BRT Vision & Principles Study

- The BRT Vision & Principles Study will help support the development of a network of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service. BRT is a premium, often rail-like, service that is faster and more reliable than traditional bus service.
- The study will develop a vision for the future countywide BRT network including standards for BRT service and design criteria.
- The study will identify and prioritize promising BRT corridors for future investment.
- The study will help support promoting faster bus speeds, greater reliability, and improved customer experience.
- The Contract was awarded to Sutra Research & Analytics at the October 25, 2018 Board Meeting and is anticipated to be complete in Spring 2021.

<u>Thinking Outside the Lane</u>

- Silver Line ridership increased 2.3% on the ExpressLanes in FY18. Riders saved up to an average of over 13 minutes when in the ExpressLanes compared to the general-purpose lanes.
- Initial studies and attempts of utilizing shoulder lanes for bus travel began on the 134 freeway as part of the express service to Burbank Airport. However, chokepoints at the 2 freeway denied the project from moving forward.
- Planning and Operations staff will continue to identify potential areas that allow bus travel within freeway shoulders.

<u>Pursue Signal Preemption for Buses & Trains</u>

- Metro worked with LADOT to implement new signal timing on Washington Blvd. that matches current operating speeds. (January 2018)
- Testing speed advisory system for use on Metro Orange Line to assist operators in obtaining green lights; makes use of Metro's connected bus project implementation. Proof of concept expected to be completed by end of fiscal year 2019.
- Metro has been working with Long Beach staff on the final implementation of transit signal priority improvement along Long Beach Bl. We will not see benefits of this until after New Blue Phase I is complete in May 2019.

<u>Develop Strategy to Improve Bus Speeds Along Major Corridors</u>

- Metro has hired consultants to evaluate up to five (5) heavily congested corridors & propose congestion reduction mitigation strategies beginning in April/May 2019. The full program of possible mitigation efforts all five corridors is anticipated by August 2019.
- Metro is investigating the possibility of extending current legislation to allow Metro to install "Yield to Bus" signals on the rear of Metro buses to enable buses to more easily re-enter traffic after servicing a bus stop. If this measure is enacted, Metro will need additional enforcement to ensure that motorists adhere to the program.
- Metro is also considering other programs that will require aggressive enforcement of prohibitions (e.g. motorists will not be able to stop in or block bus zones, not blocking intersections with heavy cross traffic, and other traffic operations to reduce the incidence of grid-locked intersections).

3 Month Look Ahead

<u>NextGen Bus Study</u>

- Complete Step 2 – Recommend Service Concepts for Board approval – Spring 2019

<u>BRT Vision & Principles Study</u>

- Project Kickoff & Coordination

<u>Congested Corridors</u>

- Staff will work closely with the City of LA to develop potential solutions for mitigating congestion that affects bus service. Staff met with LADOT and representatives of the Mayor's office to review the work of consultants hired to examine 5 heavily congested corridors and to enlist their support for the development of realistic mitigation plans.
- Work will continue on the validation of the Metro Orange Speed Improvement advisory system as well as implementation of the Transit Priority System in the City of Long Beach

PILOT MICROTRANSIT

More than 50% of all trips in Los Angeles County are short (1-5 mile) trips, yet Metro captures a small share of those trips. The prevalence of transportation networking companies, such as Uber and Lyft, is generating popular new on-demand travel options for many people. However, these types of services are not accessible to all residents and can add to congestion and pollution.

The opportunity for Metro is to leverage this new and emerging technology to encourage ridesharing of short trips (approximately 20 mins in vehicle) and as a result improve the user experience of current and future customers. This service will encourage current customers to ride the system more regularly for a safe, comfortable, reliable single-direction or round-trip ride. Customers will also be able to use this service for a seamless transfer experience to Metro's suite of existing services.

The pilot project will:

- Allow customers to order, track, and pay for trips and passes via a mobile app or phone;
- Provide reliable access to real-time information;
- Make possible a single mobile app for trip information and fare payment;
- Provide a safe on demand service within the region; and,
- Offer easy connections to other Metro, municipal, and regional services and offer service for complete trip solutions.

Progress to Date:

- Three feasibility study contracts have been awarded to RideCo, Via/Nomad, and Transdev
- Design elements, consisting of market research, outreach/marketing, fare structure analysis, software customizations, and vehicle selections, are underway.
- Metro currently has 17 geographies identified with potential demand for short trips that are not currently captured by the public sector (Metro and/or local operators). Short trips are defined as 1-6 miles or about 20 minutes in-vehicle.
- Over the next few months, Metro will be processing the data sets and market research collected by the three private sector partners (RideCo, Transdev and NoMad/Via). Partners are currently working on project planning and design. Metro has not finalized the design elements of this service.
- Metro will be sharing regular updates over email. This will include data from surveys which can be applied to other regional pilots. Metro is also convening an on-demand technology working group for project managers throughout the region.

3 Month Look Ahead

- Board approval of budget – Q4 FY2019
- The first round of in-person meetings will be with local operators and will be scheduled based on request. The goal is to identify a handful of areas where local partners are interested in deploying and championing this service. Metro wants to work hand-in-hand with local operators to ensure this service offers a net gain to the public sector in terms of trips and user experience. As such, Metro is targeting current SOV and TNC trips.
- Metro anticipates launching this service in multiple areas and plans to sequence the deployments with the first launch in December 2019. The timeline is subject to change based on securing regional, community, business, and private sector partnerships.

MOBILITY INTEGRATOR FOR LA COUNTY

Technological innovations are changing the way customers access goods and services. They influence how businesses operate, create virtual worlds of social interactions and economic transactions that further reshape the mobility landscape and change travel preferences and service performance expectations. Metro will strive to serve as a mobility integrator, leveraging all services and technologies to create seamless trip experiences for the customers. One of the most immediate areas of opportunity is with the Transit Access Pass (TAP) program and the integration of this payment system across services and providers so that customers need only one gateway to access mobility services.

Progress to Date:

TAPforce

- September 29, 2018 - Launched TAPforce System which enables Mobility as a Service (MaaS) and includes a TAP Wallet that can be used to pay for account-based services with a cloud-based TAP account. This system sits as an accompanying layer on top of the legacy tap-card-based system that enables seamless connection to TAP payment functions without installation of hardware devices.
- TAPforce now enables connection to an infinite number of new systems. Metro Bike Share was the first to launch on September 29. Now, customers can sign up for the program, put funds into the TAP Wallet for Bike Share, or load funds on their TAP card for transit use, all in one convenient place at taptogo.net.
- In the past, a credit or debit card was required to provide access to many mobility services, but TAPforce now includes an equity component that enables programs to use the cash function to load to their TAP accounts. Programs may choose to use this function with a balance requirement or income validation, but the ability to load cash has opened up program use for cash-based populations that were excluded in the past because they had no access to credit/debit functions.

TAP Integration

- October 2018 – Completed integration with Metro Bikeshare so that you can use your TAP card to pay for bikeshare.
- Currently, the TAP program is working on integration approaches with our Mobility on Demand, MicroTransit, and parking services programs. External discussions are underway with Lyft, Uber, ride hailing, and scooter rental companies to offer TAP payment for these additional services.

- For the launch of the Mobility-on-Demand (MOD) pilot, TAP worked with the Office of Extraordinary Innovation (OEI) and Via to provide an in-app digital check of TAPforce and the LIFE program to enable discounts for MOD customers with TAP cards.
- TAP is working with OEI to enable TAP integration with the MicroTransit pilot service.

<u>Transfer on 2nd boarding</u>

- Eliminated paper transfers
- Increased interagency transfer time period by 30 min
- Transfers automatic on TAP; paid with Stored Value

3 Month Look Ahead

- TAP will continue expanding current TAP-connected programs to enable Mobility as a Service (MaaS). In addition to Bike Share, Mobility on Demand and Microtransit, the list of programs to which TAP is reaching out include scooter rental companies, ride sourcing companies, parking services, electric vehicle car charging and ExpressLanes.
- Confirm integration approach for MicroTransit Pilot Project.

UNIVERSAL BLUE LIGHT PROGRAM

While Metro has implemented an emergency call for aid system that allows commuters to quickly contact authorities in the event of an emergency, the locations of these fixtures are not adequately identified. This difficulty in locating the call for aid fixtures may leave commuters in those areas potentially vulnerable and unable to signal for emergency assistance which could result in decreasing customer satisfaction and safety.

The Blue-Light Emergency Call Box initiative seeks to install new and improved emergency Blue Light fixtures throughout the LA Metro's transit system in an effort to improve safety and security of Metro's customers. The installation of Blue Light technology will serve as the foundation for aligning and enhancing the consistency and effectiveness of Metro's customer-facing security devices.

Progress to Date:

After significant research and coordination with the Arts & Design and Civil Rights departments, Metro has branded the unit as the Metro 'Help Point' to avoid confusion with Metro's current emergency 'Blue Light' system. The 'Help Point' is modeled after the Help Point used by the New York MTA, and over time, is designed to replace the existing E-tel, G-tel, and P-tel units systemwide.

Metro is currently working through the design concept. The Gensler (consultant) design team coordinated with Metro internal departments, including Civil Rights (ADA Accessibility) and Signage & Environmental Graphics to ensure all required conceptual design details and basic functionality have been accounted for.

3 Month Look Ahead:

- Quality Assurance process for design review and comment – FY20 Q1
- Complete design development – FY20 Q2
- Draft Request For Proposals – FY20 Q4

SHINING MORE LIGHTS

There are many bus stops within the LA Metro system that can benefit from enhanced lighting. An assessment by LA Metro Service Planning staff identified a number of bus stops that needed additional lighting for enhanced safety. Improving lighting has the capability to deter crime and improve sense of security for anyone waiting for transit at bus stops.

The total cost for the Project is estimated to be $750,000 consisting of an FTA grant and local funds matching. Up to 18 bus stops were prioritized from a list developed by Metro Service Planning and can be funded through this project. Under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with LA Metro, the City of LA will design, procure, install, and maintain these street lights.

Progress to Date:

- An additional three Stops (for a total of 21 Stops) were identified in 16 locations across the city that can benefit from this project. The list of project locations is as follows:

(M)=MAJOR, (S)=SECONDARY, (L)=LOCAL, (C)=COLLECTOR STREET	CROSS	STREET	CROSS
YORK BLVD. (S)	AVE. 49. (L)	SLAUSON AVE. (S)	2ND AVE. (L)
SAN FERNANDO RD. (S)	EAGLE ROCK BLVD. (S)	SLAUSON AVE. (S)	VAN NESS AVE. (S)
SAN FERNANDO RD. (S)	VERDUGO RD. (L)	FLORENCE AVE. (S)	AVALON BLVD. (S)
VERMONT AVE. (S)	MELROSE AVE. (S)	VERMONT AVE. (S)	76TH ST.. (L)
VERMONT AVE. (S)	4TH ST. (L)	VERMONT AVE. (S)	94TH ST.. (L)
CESAR CHAVEZ AVE. (S)	VIGNES ST. (L)	O FARRELL ST. (L)	BEACON ST.. (S)
CENTRAL AVE. (S)	6TH ST. (S)	CENTURY BLVD. (S)	LA CIENEGA BLVD. (S)
ADAMS BLVD. (S)	BROADWAY (S)	SHERMAN WAY (S)	TOPANGA CANYON BLVD. (S)
38TH ST. (L)	BROADWAY (S)		

- The project has been designed and a contract was awarded to Elecnor Belco Electric, Inc. for $538,472 on June 20, 2018.
- Pre-construction meetings took place and equipment has been ordered.
- Construction commenced January 2019.

3 Month Look Ahead:

- Anticipated project completion date is March 2019.

THE POWER OF TAP

Technological innovations are changing the way customers access goods and services. Transit must prepare to be competitive in the new markets that include more choices and new options for customers.

TAP is transforming fare collection with new technology to meet the travel demands of LA County riders. Innovative solutions must continue to be applied to a variety of projects that leverage existing systems, make fare purchases easier, enhance payment options, and integrate multimodal programs into one payment system. Solutions are needed that can span both the legacy transit system and the new cloud-based system. Completion of these projects ensures that fare payment supports mobility as a service for all customers.

Progress to Date:

TAP Website

- Enhanced the taptogo website, resulting in nearly double the number of page views, sessions and users over last year
- Added family account capabilities that enable parent/child account management
- Launched TAP Wallet-enhanced payment options including cash options for riders without bank accounts
- Added ability to create discounts and promotional codes for ridership incentives

Stored Value sales added on bus

- Replaced declining Metro Day Pass with Stored Value
- Aligned fare payment options with customer demand

TAP vending machine improvements

- Made improvements to vending machine screens based on customer input
- EZ transit passes added to product choices
- Implemented Multiple Metro Day Pass purchases in one transaction
- Enabled customized Stored Value purchases
- Adjusted TAP card cost for consistency across the network

TAP vendor network

- Increased vendor network by 20% for a total of 445 vendor locations
- Added 84 LA County public libraries to vendor network

3 Month Look Ahead

- TAP's mobile app solution will begin testing in February 2019. Metro and Muni Farebox equipment is currently being upgraded and Metro rail station validators are being replaced. This upgrade needs to be completed for security purposes before the app can launch. Upgrades are scheduled to begin in February and completed by late summer 2019.
- TAP will implement automatic LIFE discounts on TAP; Elimination of paper coupons began in January 2019.
- TAP will continue transitioning customers and organizations from tokens onto TAP throughout the next three months, ultimately finishing token use in November 2019.
- The rollout of a new Retail Point of Sales (RPOS) device will begin February 2019
- Complete TAP mobile app focus groups and testing

METRO MAINTENANCE DIARIES

In an effort to enhance the customer experience and advance the continuous improvement of systemwide cleanliness, Metro Operations performed a review of cleanliness procedures and inspections of bus stops, bus/rail stations, rolling stock, and shared rights-of-way (ROW). Metro property, including ROW heavily affected by homelessness, will be addressed with the development of encampment clean-up protocols to keep our ROW safe and clean. Also, Metro will continue to collaborate with partner agencies to improve cleanliness, and Operations will strengthen station, terminal and vehicle cleaning procedures.

Progress to Date:

- In October 2018, Operations performed a comprehensive review of Metro cleanliness program for Metro bus stops, bus/rail stations, rolling stock systemwide.
    - Staff recognized multi-department involvement and level of effort was required for cleanliness program effectiveness.
    - Staff adopted a rail facilities tablet platform for incident reporting and is expanding this reporting program to cover all stations and bus terminals.
    - An enhanced station cleanliness program will launch in July 2019.
- Metro is also performing Security & Ancillary Area Intrusion Surge Program in the subway stations which has been ongoing since April 2018. The purpose of this program is to increase customer safety by preventing intrusion. This program has been led by Security & Law Enforcement and Operations, has resulted in over 300 clean up requests, and has reduced intrusions on the Red and Purple Lines.
- Metro is currently working with LA City, County, and railroads to improve cleanliness of multiple locations and along any shared Rights-Of-Way (ROW).
- The following Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) are in place to enhance system cleanliness.
    - MOU with Metrolink for maintenance activities performed along shared ROW.
    - MOU with the City of Long Beach for maintenance activities performed along the Metro Blue Line south of Willow Station.
- Metro will continue to seek additional MOUs with railroads in joint corridors and provide information flow to railroads, jurisdictions, etc. for coordination and joint clean-up activities coordination.
- Returned to the Board in January 2019 with a Cleanliness Program Update, including collaboration and partnership agreements with external agencies to contribute to Metro's cleanliness results.

3 Month Look Ahead:

- Staff intends to provide more detail on the Customer Service and Experience KPIs in an update to the Board in the FY19 Q3.

MAKING THE SWITCH

In response to public comment about soiled seats and to more efficiently maintain vehicle cleanliness and aesthetics, Metro Operations launched a heavy rail vehicle (HRV) seat replacement project in early 2018. To date, Metro has received positive feedback regarding this project and therefore, plans to expand this program are currently in development. The HRV seat replacement project includes a total of 104 vehicles and is expected to be completed over the next 2 years. The program includes conversion of all fabric seat inserts to vinyl seat inserts to improve cleanliness and allow more efficient maintenance by Metro personnel.

Progress to Date:

- The HRV seat replacement project team has converted fabric seats to vinyl for a total of 16 rail cars to-date. The goal is to complete one married pair every two months. Staff is on target to complete the seat replacement project over the course of about two years.
- Staff is also developing a scope of work to expand the interior renovation pilot project to light rail vehicles (LRVs).
- In 2019, Operations staff will continue to identify solutions for the removal of cloth seats on Metro's existing bus fleet and is working with procurement on new vehicle acquisition options that will include vinyl seats.

3 Month Look Ahead:

- Staff will continue to monitor and deliver the HRV seat replacement project on time and within budget.
- Staff will track and monitor customer and employee feedback to improve existing products and services and ensure that we are enhancing the customer experience.
- Staff will also begin development of an LRV interior renovation project scope of work, budget and schedule.

DIGITAL COUNTDOWN DISPLAYS & REAL TIME ACCURACY

Certainty of the customer journey is affected by traffic congestion, construction/detours, incidents, and related events which affect travel time. However, improving the accuracy of real-time travel information can communicate to customers if they should expect delays to their trips.

Progress to Date:

- A multi-departmental task force has been established to identify the various elements that contribute to prediction accuracy. Each element is being independently reviewed to assess potential refinements that will achieve better accuracy for the customer. The task force elements under review include the following:
    - Lateral/Longitudinal rail track sensor location accuracy;
    - Procedures for flagging missed trips in the rail prediction system;
    - Possible rail schedule adjustments that may be needed during peak load periods;
    - Duplicate train ID's for service replacement trains that create logic anomalies;
    - Investigate implementation of daily system updates on bus schedule changes (pink letters);
    - Prediction logic enhancements
- Metro staff continues to advance the connected bus project, which involves installing cellular communications on the Metro bus fleet to improve predictive arrival information by increasing the poll rate for information on vehicle location and speed.

3 Month Look Ahead:

- Continue installations for connected bus project - 1046 of 2365 (44%) completed through September 2018
- Complete proof-of-concept mobile router kit solution for P2550 fleet type (Gold Line)
- Investigate proof-of-concept mobile router kit solution for P2000 fleet type (Blue/Green Lines)

PUTTING THE CUSTOMER AT THE HEART OF THE OPERATION

Initiative 2.3 of Metro's Vision 2028 Strategic Plan commits Metro to dedicating staff resources to oversee customer experience and developing a comprehensive approach for improving customer satisfaction. Vision 2028 goes on to describe the following specific initiatives:

- Develop a unifying vision and strategy for enhancing the customer's experience,
- Improve customer journey and touch points, and
- Use data analytics to benchmark and measure system performance in meeting customer satisfaction targets.

This ridership initiative is directly aligned with Initiative 2.3 so that its execution will help to accomplish Goal 2, "Deliver outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system."

Progress to Date:

- The Metro Board of Directors, through Board motion 38.1, requested the creation of an Annual Customer Service and Experience Plan (Plan). As part of this effort and in alignment with this ridership initiative, staff is in the process of developing customer experience key performance indicators (KPIs) that will improve customer touchpoints for Metro's services. Staff will draw from a number of sources to develop these metrics, including results from our most recent Customer Satisfaction Survey and examples from some of the highest performing transit agencies and operators in the world (MTR Corporation, Singapore Land Transport Authority, Japan Railway Company, and Transport for London). High-level categories include convenience, ease-of-use, comfort, security, and customer care. Each category will include additional subcategories that will provide further detail on the metrics that address customer pain points.
- The Plan will also address staff resources needed to accomplish the customer experience goals as described in both the Board motion 38.1 and Vision 2028. Currently, Metro staff is developing the roles and responsibilities for a Customer Experience Strategist position to lead and manage the customer experience program agency-wide, which will include the oversight of key accomplishments, objectives and challenges in customer service and experience, and working with the CEO on these Ridership Initiatives.
- Metro intends to deploy periodic customer satisfaction surveys and benchmark results to the Summer 2017 survey. By tracking the trends in how customers respond to the survey questions, staff will be able to see if the improvements made have a positive effect on customers' experiences riding transit. OEI will prepare for a summer 2020 launch of the next comprehensive Customer Satisfaction Survey, benchmarked against the 2017 results. This survey will build upon the benchmark data collected for the development of Vision 2028. As

with the previous survey, staff will update the Board on the results, once the survey is completed.

3 Month Look Ahead:

- Refine Customer Service and Experience Plan and KPIs
- Provide update on status of Plan to Board in Q4 FY19

Customer Service & Experience Plan
Response to Motion 38.1

Operations, Safety, and Customer Experience Committee
February 21, 2019

Metro

Presentation Contents

- Background

- Overview of Customer Service & Experience Plan

- Next Steps

Metro

The Metro Board approved the Motion 38.1 on June 21, 2018, requesting staff to:

A. Rename the committee to the Operations, Safety, and Customer Experience Committee

B. Endorse speed, frequency, and reliability as highest priority service parameters for NextGen

C. Develop customer experience key performance indicators (KPIs)

D. Develop an Annual Customer Service & Experience Plan

Metro Vision 2028

Metro Vision 2028 Initiative 2.3 commits to:

- Develop a unifying vision and strategy for enhancing the customer experience

- Improve customer journey and touch points

- Use data analytics to benchmark and measure system performance for customer satisfaction

The response to Motion 38.1 is directly aligned with this commitment.

M Metro

Customer Service & Experience Plan

The Customer Service & Experience Plan will address:

- Key performance indicators (KPIs)
- Status of Customer Service & Experience Projects
- Transit Service Marketing & Communications
- Customer Experience Culture

Ⓜ Metro

Customer Service & Experience Plan

Key Performance Indicator Categories

- Convenience

- Ease of Use

- Comfort

- Safety/Security

- Customer Care

Metro

Customer Service & Experience Plan

Customer Service & Experience Projects

- Progress Report on Metro Ridership Initiatives

Transit Service Marketing & Communications

- Improve customer communications on topics that make customers' trips easier
- Identify new ways to engage customers

M Metro

Customer Service & Experience Plan

Customer Experience Culture

- Training to cultivate the Customer Experience Culture
  - Role mapping
- Staff Resources
  - Customer Experience Strategist
  - Oversee Plan elements
  - Report to Office of the CEO

Metro

Please note:

- The Customer Service & Experience Plan is part of a continuous improvement process; it is a work in progress

- This report is a starting point for a comprehensive and impactful customer experience strategy, as promised in Vision 2028

M Metro

Next Steps

Staff will provide an update in Q4 FY19 with more detail on:

- Performance metrics

- Resources

- Status updates for customer experience initiatives

Metro

Thank You

Customer Experience Plan 2020

Operations, Safety, and Customer Experience Committee
November 19, 2020

M Metro

Customer Experience Plan Background

Metro's Customer Experience (CX) Plan flows from:

- Vision 2028 Strategic Plan

- Board Motion 38.1

Customer Experience Definition

Customer Experience is the sum total of the experiences our customers have at every stage of their journey. The goal is to minimize pain points, maximize smooth, uneventful experiences, and find opportunities for occasional surprise and delight.

The Customer Journey:

Plan → Access → Wait → Pay → Ride → Connect → Egress

Customer Experience Vision

Our goal is to always put you first — your safety, your time, your comfort, and your peace of mind – when we connect you to people and places that matter to you.

Areas For Improvement

1. Metro Bus reliability
2. Accuracy of real time info
3. Metro Bus frequency
4. Bus stops
5. Ease of payment
6. Speed
7. Crowding
8. Personal security
9. Homelessness
10. Cleanliness

Near Term Pilot Programs (subject to funding)

1. **Metro Bus Reliability**: Help bus riders delayed by a missed run or pass-up by quickly offering them free ridehail service.

2. **Homelessness**: Deploy <u>unarmed security ambassadors</u> at terminus stations to intercede with people who are experiencing homelessness on Metro and get them the help they need. Also:

   o cost effective expansion of homeless outreach teams including on-call nursing, mental health and addiction services

   o temporary short-term shelter until more housing is available from local and regional partners

   o Regular, statistically valid counts to evaluate results.

Near Term Pilot Programs (continued)

3. **Security**: Flexibly dispatch homeless outreach, mental health workers, unarmed security ambassadors, or law enforcement as the situation demands.

4. **Cleanliness**: Test elevator attendants to deter crime, urination, defecation, and drug use, and make elevators safe and pleasant for seniors, people with disabilities, travelers with luggage, and others.

5. **Bus Stops**: Test low-cost seating, possibly cooling, lighting, real time information, and wayfinding for people who are blind or low vision.

Other Highlights (subject to funding)

A. Metro Bus Reliability: Refine staffing plans to avoid missed runs, and consider fast-track hiring for licensed commercial drivers

B. Real Time Information: Feed data from improved prediction engine to apps to accurately predict Metro ETA's, and replace 18-year-old ATMS system

C. Speed: More bus-only lanes and rail/bus signal priority

D. Cleanliness: Resume funding for vinyl seats

E. Security: Resume funding for Call Points

Customer Experience Improvement Menu

25 items on the menu totaling:

FY21 midyr	FY22	FY23	FY24
$ 5.6 million	$ 170.0 million	$ 344.7 million	$ 272.4 million

Note that Metro's FY21 budget is 16.5% less than the prior year due to the pandemic. Funding these customer experience improvements will depend on how quickly the pandemic ends and the economy rebounds.

Future Customer Experience Plans

1. Journey mapping and equity
2. Organizational culture and values
3. Surprise and delight
4. Out-of-town visitors
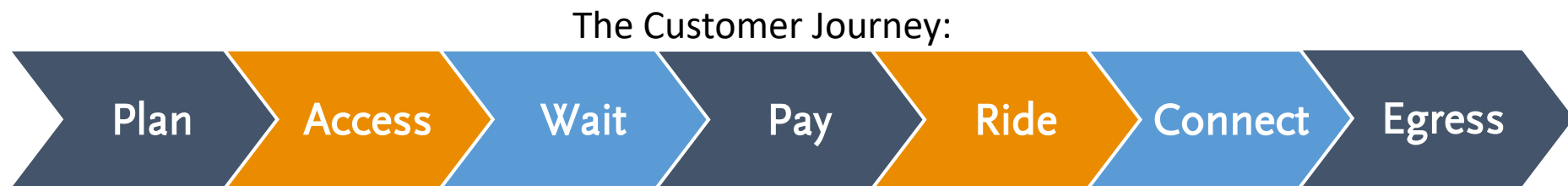
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   o temporary short-term shelter until more housing is available from local and regional partners

Near Term Pilot Programs (continued)

3. **Security**: Flexibly dispatch homeless outreach, mental health workers, unarmed security ambassadors, or law enforcement as the situation demands.

4. **Cleanliness**: Test elevator attendants to deter crime, urination, defecation, and drug use, and make elevators safe and pleasant for seniors, people with disabilities, travelers with luggage, and others.

5. **Bus Stops**: Work with cities to provide shelters at bus stops, and test low-cost seating, possibly cooling, lighting, real time information, and wayfinding for people who are blind or low vision.

Other Highlights (subject to funding)

A. Metro Bus Reliability: To avoid missed runs, maintain higher Operator Assignment Ratio and consider fast-track hiring for licensed commercial drivers

B. Real Time Information: Feed data from improved prediction engine to apps to accurately predict Metro ETA's, and replace 18-year-old ATMS system

C. Speed: More bus-only lanes and rail/bus signal priority

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Metro 2020 Customer Experience Plan

Thank You