



A PATH FORWARD

Metro's Recovery Task Force

PROGRESS REPORT 2 — JULY 8, 2020



Metro®



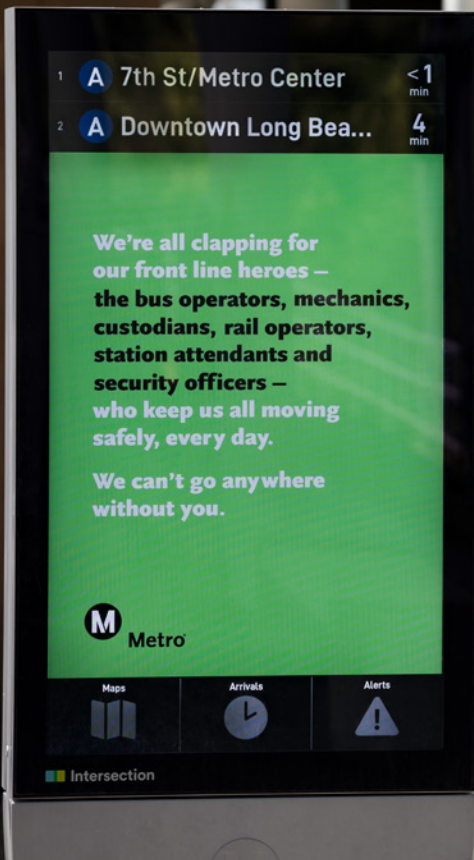
Table of Contents

About the Task Force	3
Task Force Progress to Date.....	6
COVID-19 Impacts and Response – An Update	8
Updated Data on Impacts to LA County.....	9
Latest Research on Transmission and Implications for Transit ...	10
Customer Survey Results.....	11
Transit App Survey Results	12
Examples of Metro’s Response to COVID-19	13
Early Action Recommendations – Updates.....	14
Phase one: Respond and Prepare	15
Phase two: Relaunch	24
Phase three: Recover	33
Work Plan and Timeline	36
Contact Info	37



About the Task Force

The COVID-19 Response Task Force is a staff committee at Metro responsible for providing advice and recommendations to the senior leadership team (SLT), Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Board of Directors on recovery from the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.



Membership

The task force is chaired by the Chief Innovation Officer and staffed by the Office of Extraordinary Innovation and Communications. Membership of the Task Force consists of Metro staff nominated by SLT members and chosen to secure a balanced membership with diverse experience and perspectives, with a preference for graduates of or participants in Metro Leadership Academy, ENO/Max and the Women & Girls Governing Council. The Executive Officers for Equity and Race and Customer Experience are on the task force.

Joshua Schank, *OEI – Chair*

Stephanie Burke, *Human Capital Development*

Peter Carter, *Planning*

Lilian de Loza-Gutierrez, *Communications*

KeAndra Cylear Dodds, *OCEO*

Paula Guevara, *Civil Rights*

Imelda Hernandez, *Systems Security & Law Enforcement*

Nancy Hinojosa, *Risk, Safety & Asset Management*

Kyle Holland, *Office of Management & Budget*

Rani Narula-Woods, *Operations*

Olivia Nelson-Richard, *TCU*

Melissa Park, *Congestion Reduction*

Heather Repenning, *Program Management*

Heather Severin, *Program Management*

Georgia Sheridan, *Planning*

Fumi Sotozono, *Management Audit Services*

Jessica Spearman, *Vendor/Contract Management*

Quintin Sumabat, *Operations*

Alvin Trotter Jr., *Program Management/
Third Party Administration*

Elezanbee Vue, *Operations*

Aaron Weinstein, *OCEO*

Staffed by

Mark Vallianatos, *OEI*

Emma Huang, *OEI*

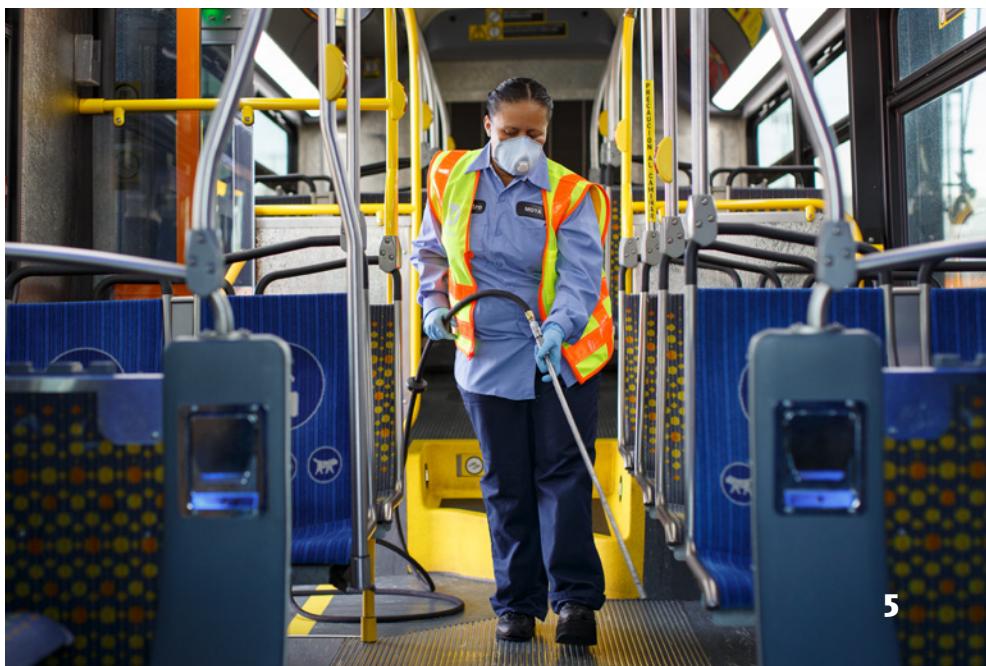
John Gordon, *Communications*

Goals

The task force will recommend a set of actions that Metro can take to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and recover from it. Task force goals and deliverables include:

- 1 Identifying and recommending potential actions that Metro can take to respond to the pandemic; to recover after the pandemic; to help lead an equitable economic recovery for LA County; and to advance mobility without congestion as the 'new normal' after the pandemic.
- 2 Issuing monthly reports to the SLT, CEO and Board on progress towards a recovery plan, including early action items to consider taking.
- 3 Drafting a final recovery report.

Metro's Vision 2028 Strategic Plan, with its focus on world-class transportation, a strong LA County and accountable Metro leadership, is the foundation for these efforts. The task force is also flexible, identifying new strategies to adapt to changing circumstances.





Task Force Progress to Date



The task force was launched in late April 2020. It has taken the following steps in its first two months of work:

- > SLT members nominated staff to the task force Chair, and ratified the list of members. Once it was constituted, task force staff and members drafted and signed a charter identifying goals, structure, roles and timelines.
- > Task force participants quickly identified more than 100 potential recommendations that could help Metro achieve its recovery goals. These ideas were drawn from programs and policies being implemented by Metro in response to COVID-19; from conversations with Metro staff on additional recovery options; and from research on recovery best practices underway around the world.
- > The task force established an equity subcommittee led by task force member KeAndra Cylear Dodds, the agency's Executive Officer for Equity & Race. The equity subcommittee is using a new equity tool to perform a rapid equity assessment of potential recommendations. The purpose of this equity analysis is to help identify which actions can help vulnerable customers and communities; reduce disparities; and mitigate any unintended harms. See the rapid equity tool below.
- > The task force chose an initial list of 12 early action recommendations in May 2020, based on alignment with Vision 2028 and equity assessment, as well as on expected recovery benefits, timeliness and financial impacts. The Chair presented these 12 ideas to the SLT and to the Policy and Planning Committee of the Board of Directors. In June, the task force recommended an additional six early actions. See page 14 of this report for a description of the 18 early action recommendations.
- > Task force members divided into small working groups to begin developing more detailed implementation plans for these early action items in discussion with responsible departments. These working groups also developed cost recommendations for the early action items.
- > To inform its deliberations, the task force heard presentations on internal resources and programs that could contribute to recovery. These included presentations on equity assessments; results from a survey of 1900 Metro customers surveyed in June; a summary of interviews Aaron Weinstein and KeAndra Cylear Dodd conducted with Metro bus operators to get their perception of Metro customer experiences during the COVID pandemic; a research memo summarizing the pandemic's impacts on Metro and LA County and lessons from other disasters; the agency's unsolicited proposal process; and the Measure M Visionary Seed Fund. The task force Chair met regularly with the head of Metro's Incident Management Team to exchange updates.
- > The task force developed an external and internal outreach plan to share its work with – and gather recovery ideas from – the public, stakeholders and Metro employees. Committees and organizations that have been briefed by the task force include all Metro Service Councils, Metro's Policy Advisory Committee, Accessibility Advisory Committee, the General Managers and the Streets and Freeways Sub-Committee of the various municipal operators within LA County, BizFed and Valley Industry & Commerce Association, and will continue to meet with other groups during the coming weeks. The task force has also scheduled its first virtual public town hall on July 9 from 6 – 7:30 PM where information will be presented completely in both English and Spanish utilizing two distinct online access links.

The task force is using a **rapid equity assessment** tool to advance equity and reduce disparities in Metro's recovery planning and actions. In analyzing potential recovery recommendations, the tool leads the task force to consider the following questions:

1. Will the decision being made impact any equity groups?
2. Could this present an equity opportunity?
3. Who will benefit or be burdened by this decision?
4. How will the decision prioritize the needs of historically marginalized communities and others most impacted by the crisis?
5. What are strategies to mitigate any potential negative impacts of this decision?
6. Summarize any changes to decision based on equity assessment.



COVID-19 Impacts on Transportation and Mobility in LA County – An Update



The COVID-19 pandemic is a rapidly-evolving crisis. The task force continues to monitor data showing the impacts on transportation and mobility in LA County. Data sets through end of May and into early June 2020 show:

Person Miles Travelled:

- > Since the first Safer At Home order in March 2020, on average, daily person miles travelled has steadily increased. It hit a daily low of 15 miles/person on April 15th, but as of June 26, 2020, daily PMT was at 39.6.¹

Metro Services for June:

- > Since the start of the Safer At Home order in March 2020, on average, bus ridership has been steadily trending upward. Average weekday ridership for the last week of May and first days of June was 326,861, or approximately 38% of normal ridership.
- > Rail ridership is growing much slower than bus ridership. Average weekday ridership for the last week of May and first days of June was 115,146, or approximately 36% of normal ridership.
- > Metro's Park & Ride function has been down on average about 80%, which is proportional to corridor ridership decline. Metro has opened its parking facilities to other uses, including resident parking to accommodate the Safer At Home order.
- > Metro Bike Share saw an average of 36% decline, which is consistent from May 2020.
- > Of available data, Metro ExpressLanes saw an average reduction of 67% of normal volume transaction counts.
- > Ridership on Metro's Mobility-On-Demand partnership with Via is approximately at 80% of normal levels.

Unemployment Claims:

- > More than one in five workers in LA County is out of work. Seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in LA County increased over the month to 20.9% in May 2020, from a revised 20.8% in April 2020, and was above the rate of 4.5% one year ago.² This is compared to the California seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 16.3% in May 2020, and 4.1% in May 2019.
- > LA County has been hit particularly hard, given its large leisure and hospitality sector. The leisure and hospitality sector in LA County is down 44% from a year ago.

COVID-19 Infection & Death Rate:

- > California continues to see a surge in cases. On Monday, June 22nd, the state has reported more than 6,000 infections for the first time since the pandemic hit the U.S. On Tuesday, June 23rd, that number shot up to 6,652 cases reported in the state with more than 2,000 in LA County.³ The U.S. has seen COVID-19 cases surge to the highest level in two months, back to the former peak in April 2020. Worldwide, more than 9.2 million people have been confirmed infected, and close to a half-million have died.
- > As of June 23, there have been 88,262 cases and 3,171 deaths in LA County.⁴
- > Within Metro's own workforce, as of July 1, there have been 140 confirmed cases (80 employees, 55 contractors, five vendors). This includes two confirmed deaths (one employee, one contractor).⁵

¹ See <https://data.covid.umd.edu/>

² See [https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/file/lfmonth/la\\$ps.pdf](https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/file/lfmonth/la$ps.pdf)

³ See <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-06-24/california-surge-increase-coronavirus-cases>; <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2020-06-24/us-coronavirus-cases-highest-level-in-2-months>

⁴ See <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>

⁵ See <https://www.metro.net/about/about-metro/metro-tracks-covid-19-cases/>

- > Of those who died in LA County, information about race and ethnicity is available for 2,112 people (99% of the cases reported by Public Health) 40% of deaths occurred among Latinx residents, 29% among White residents, 17% among Asian residents, 12% among African American residents, 1% among Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander residents and 1% among residents identifying with other races.⁶
- > African Americans, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders and people living in communities with high levels of poverty, continue to have the highest rate of death per 100,000 people for COVID-19 when compared to other groups. Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders have a death rate of 108 per 100,000, African Americans have a death of 28 per 100,000, Latinos/Latinxs have a death of 25 per 100,000, Asians have a death rate of 18 per 100,000, and Whites have a death rate of 14 per 100,000. People who live in areas with high rates of poverty have almost four times the rate of deaths for COVID-19 with 46 per 100,000 people, compared with communities with very low poverty levels who had a death rate of 12 per 100,000.⁶
- > Several reports find clear evidence that mask-wearing can help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and that the more people wearing masks, the better.⁷
- > Masks reduce the amount of respiratory droplets emitted by blocking them.⁸
- > One study found that mask mandates in 15 states and DC led to a slowdown in daily COVID-19 growth rate, which become more apparent over time.⁹
- > Another study found that countries with high mask-wearing compliance and/or cultural norms favoring mask wearing had lower death rates.¹⁰

Emerging research findings show that concerns about COVID-19 spreading on public transit are unsubstantiated, so long as the public is diligent about mask wearing.

- > Between May 9th and June 3rd, 150 clusters of new coronavirus cases emerged in France. However, there were no clusters associated with public transit. Not a single COVID-19 cluster emerged on France's six metro systems, 26 tram and light rail networks or numerous bus routes.¹¹
- > None of the infection clusters in Japan were traced to the country's commuter trains, which have high ridership. Tokyo has had no reported upticks in infection since it reopened its economy.¹²
- > Milan has re-opened its transit systems and has not seen subsequent infection spikes.¹³
- > None of the 355 infection clusters examined in an Austrian study were traceable to riding transit.¹⁴
- > The post-peak outbreak in Seoul, South Korea, was attributed to cluster infections from individuals visiting nightclubs, not transit.¹⁵

Emerging Research on COVID-19 Spread and Transmission:

The scientific understanding of COVID-19, including its transmission and prevention, continues to evolve rapidly. The need for sanitization and social distancing has been widely understood and adopted since the start of the outbreak, but adoption of masks and face coverings has been slower. The most recent science, however, supports the position that masks, source control and improved ventilation form a vital component of the public health response to COVID-19, while transmission of the disease via contact with surfaces appears to be less of a factor than initially stated in CDC guidance.

⁶ See <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/phcommon/public/media/mediapubhpdetail.cfm?prid=2409>

⁷ See <https://www.ucsf.edu/news/2020/06/417906/still-confused-about-masks-heres-science-behind-how-face-masks-prevent>

⁸ See <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2007800>

⁹ See <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hlthaff.2020.00818>

¹⁰ See https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342198360_Association_of_country-wide_coronavirus_mortality_with_demographics_testing_lockdowns_and_public_wearing_of_masks_Update_June_15_2020

¹¹ See <https://www.leparisien.fr/societe/coronavirus-pourquoi-aucun-cluster-n-a-ete-detecte-dans-les-transports-05-06-2020-8330415.php>

¹² See <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/05/japan-ends-its-covid-19-state-emergency>

¹³ See <https://www.forbes.com/sites/iredominioni/2020/05/25/for-the-first-time-no-deaths-registered-in-the-most-hit-region-by-coronavirus-in-italy/#3d6762a72766>

¹⁴ See <https://www.ages.at/service/service-presse/pressemeldungen/epidemiologische-abklaerung-am-beispiel-covid-19/>

¹⁵ See <https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20200510001254320>

Survey Data from Metro's Riders

An e-mail based survey of a cross-section of Metro riders was launched on May 29, 2020, and ran through June 24, 2020. Metro received 1,861 completed responses, and the data was weighted to ensure that the survey results match the income and race characteristics of Metro riders. The responses will help guide task force recommendations.

Key findings:

Future ridership may be constrained by job losses, and by growth in working from home.

- > Among customers who were riding Metro in January 2020 prior to the COVID-19 Safer At Home Orders, 24% are now mostly working from home. This figure is higher among rail commuters (32%) than bus-only customers (17%).
- > An additional 9% are going to work part time and working from home part time.
- > 13% lost their job since January, and 21% were furloughed.
- > Among those who are telecommuting at least part time, 39% say their employer will continue to allow it after Safer At Home orders are discontinued (51% when looking at just rail commuters), and another 39% say they don't know.

Improved cleaning, less crowding, addressing homelessness and lower fares are key considerations for current riders and people considering a return to Metro.

- > As bus customers consider their transportation options after Safer At Home orders end, the top single improvements they want are:
 1. Reduced crowding (16%)
 2. Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of bus interiors (21%, including 5% who picked UV disinfection)
 3. Lower fares (10%), and
 4. Doing more to address homelessness (10%).

- > As rail customers consider their transportation options after Safer At Home orders end, the top single improvements they want are:

1. Doing more to address homelessness (16%),
2. Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of train interiors (21%, including 5% who picked UV disinfection),
3. Lower fares (10%), and
4. Reduced crowding (13%).

Continuing to reduce the number of customers without a mask or face covering, and improving social distancing, will be important going forward.

- > When thinking about their most recent trip, only half of respondents (51%) said that more than 80% of fellow customers were wearing a mask, and among just rail commuters the figure was only 41%.
- > Only about half of customers (49%) reported there was adequate social distancing on their most recent trip.
- > Nearly 2/3 of riders (63%) say that the most important factor for safety is that riders wear masks or face coverings. 37% say adequate social distancing is the most important factor.

Survey Data from Metro's Official App, *Transit*

In June 2020, *Transit* surveyed Los Angeles area app users to learn how they feel about the risks of COVID-19, crowding on board public transit and what type of information would make them most likely to start riding again. *Transit* received 1,025 completed responses from users in the LA area.¹⁶

Key Findings:

- > Forty-one percent of surveyed app users in the Los Angeles area reported they are riding public transit less frequently due to COVID-19; 36% are not avoiding transit; and 22% are completely avoiding transit.
- > About 50% of surveyed app users in the Los Angeles area are already riding transit as often as they did before COVID-19. About 20% of surveyed app users are waiting for future improvements in COVID-19 management before they resume riding as often as they did before COVID-19. About 25% only want to ride as often once there is a vaccine and/or COVID-19 is no longer an issue. Less than 5% responded they will not ride as often ever again.
- > Over 65% of surveyed app users in the Los Angeles area reported riding transit in the past week for work. Over 40% reported riding transit for groceries, and close to 25% reported riding transit for medical purposes.
- > Under various occupancy/crowding scenarios, the most popular choice for respondents willing to board a bus/train is if they can stand apart, but for riders to feel comfortable riding, a plurality would prefer sitting alone.
- > Over 60% of surveyed app users stated a preference for having real-time crowding information in order to ride more often. With this information, respondents would ride more or plan differently, such as change their riding times. A majority of respondents don't board a crowded bus – they wait for the next one or take another mode.



¹⁶ The Transit survey responses were not weighted to match all the demographics of Metro riders; however, respondents were distributed across age and gender. A majority of respondents were low income and do not own cars. Close to 50% of respondents are Hispanic, and 26% took the survey in Spanish.

Additional Metro Responses to COVID-19

Once the pandemic hit, all Metro departments took action to prioritize safety, and adjust service and programs to respond. Here are a few examples:

- > On Sunday, April 19, 2020, Metro provided a modified Enhanced-Sunday schedule in response to reduced ridership levels due to COVID-19.
- > Metro has added 60-foot buses for 40-foot buses to add more capacity for social distancing and introduced rear-door boarding.
- > On Monday, May 11, 2020, Metro instituted requirements for employees and riders to wear face coverings (masks).
- > Metro has increased its cleaning regime to focus on high touch points on equipment, cleaning vehicles multiple times a day, cleaning and sanitizing all vehicles at start of and end of revenue service and has introduced end of line terminal cleaning.
- > Metro has installed sanitation stations and hand sanitizer dispensers at major transit stops and stations.
- > Metro is also researching how to equip buses and trains with dispensers.
- > On Monday, June 8, 2020, Metro's Street Teams began distributing masks to riders at various stations throughout the Metro system, focusing on stations areas with higher ridership numbers.
- > On Sunday, June 21, 2020, Metro again modified service and added 7-8% in hours to service offerings, which included adding service to 95 lines (over half of Metro lines) and increased frequency on certain select Tier 1 and Tier 2 lines.
- > Metro's rail system service continues on 12-minute peak headways and 20-minute headways during evening hours.
- > Metro adjusted its first/last mile partnership with Via to include point to point on-demand rides within the service areas, and extended the zones to include essential locations like hospitals and grocery stores. Metro also joined forces with Best Start, an initiative funded by First 5 LA, to deliver food and diapers to vulnerable families. Food delivery service helps keep people sheltered in place with less exposure for grocery or food bank workers.



Early Action Recommendations

The task force is recommending early actions that the agency can take in advance of the final recovery report. These are time-sensitive measures that will be more effective if they are implemented soon. Some of the early action items relate to immediate response measures to address health and safety priorities. Others are steps that can help Metro prepare for and position itself for recovery.

The task force isn't working in a vacuum. Its members, drawn from diverse departments, are conduits to actions that Metro is already taking to respond to the pandemic and to prepare for recovery. In fact, many of the action items recommended by the task force are meant to reinforce and support steps that are ongoing within the agency.

Recommendations were chosen based on a few criteria, including a rapid equity assessment; the timeliness of an action; anticipated mobility or public health benefits; and a goal for the overall package of recommendations to be revenue neutral or revenue positive.

To help organize the 18 early action items that the task force has recommended so far, they are presented in three categories that correspond to different timelines for recovery. These categories are:

1. **Respond and prepare**, which is a short-term timeframe and the period of recovery that we are currently in;
2. **Relaunch**, which is a medium-term timeframe that Metro will be entering as Safer At Home orders are loosened; and
3. **Recovery**, which is a medium to long term phase in which activities come back to normal – and hopefully to a 'new normal' of better mobility. These time periods should not be considered to be entirely distinct; they overlap to some extent and shift as the conditions of the pandemic change. (see below).

All of the May and June early action items are organized together in these categories. The six June recommendations are called out with a “**NEW**” tag.

Each recommendation consists of:

- > Summary of the recommendation
- > Justification on how it can help Metro recover
- > Summary of equity impacts
- > Relevant goals from Metro's Vision 2028 Strategic Plan
- > Cost estimate for the item
- > Update on what has been done on the recommendation (for May action items; June action items will be updated in future progress reports)
- > Best practices, which are examples from other organizations

It is important to keep in mind that the task force is a recommending committee, not a decision-making body. Decisions on whether and how to implement these ideas will be made by a combination of the Board of Directors, the SLT and responsible departments. The task force will track decisions and steps taken on these recommended early action items, and will continue to include updates in future progress reports.

RESPOND AND PREPARE

RELAUNCH

RECOVERY



Phase One:

Respond and Prepare





1. Rider-led Recovery

Recommendation:

Survey Metro customers on their current transportation patterns and modes, future transportation plans and overall customer experience.

Justification:

Help identify how quickly ridership may recover and gain insights on customer experience priorities, including what makes customers feel safe to use our services.

Equity:

Surveys can determine how different racial, ethnic and income groups have experienced transportation during the pandemic and how they plan to travel in the future.

Vision 2028 Goals:

2.2 Improve legibility, ease of use, and trip information on the transit system.

3.3 Conduct genuine public and community engagement to achieve better mobility outcomes for the people of LA County.

Cost Estimate:

Costs were negligible. Effort was entirely in-house.

Update:

An e-mail-based survey of a cross-section of Metro riders was launched on May 29 and ran through June 24. Metro received 1,861 completed responses. The responses will help guide Task Force recommendations. See page 11 for a summary of survey results.

Best Practices:

Denver RTD conducted a survey of nearly 2,700 people that showed the public remains apprehensive about engaging in social activities amid the spread of the coronavirus, including riding RTD services. The majority of those who had not used transit in the past 30 days said they will take a wait-and-see approach to the pandemic before riding again.¹⁷

The Port Authority of Allegheny County surveyed riders before restrictions were gradually eased. A series of questions asks riders whether they are aware of safety precautions the agency has taken, whether they expect to return to work soon and how often they expect to use transit.¹⁸

¹⁷ See metro-magazine.com/management-operationsnews/738409/public-cautious-about-using-transit-rtd-survey-shows

¹⁸ See post-gazette.com/news/transportation/2020/05/13/Port-Authority-survey-increase-service-Campos-Allegheny-County-COVID-19/stories/202005130135

2. Safer Streets for All

Recommendation:

Work with the Board to authorize Cities that received 2020 Open Street Grants to repurpose some or all of funding on safe/slow street programs; and explore ways to encourage other LA County jurisdictions to implement safe/slow streets.

Justification:

Create more space for safe, distanced walking and biking for transportation and recreation; showcase how road space can be repurposed for more multi-modal transportation.

Equity:

This offers an equity opportunity to serve low-income communities, which tend to have more overcrowding, less access to parks and open space, higher levels of vehicle collisions and injuries, and fewer bike lanes. To ensure marginalized communities are engaged in a solution, Metro should encourage cities to partner with CBOs for outreach and education.

Cost Estimate:

This is a no-cost program since grants have already been awarded.

Update:

Metro's Board of Directors passed Motion 40 implementing this idea at its May 2020 meeting. (Board motion 2020-0375). So far one city (the City of Los Angeles) has inquired about repurposing Open Street awards for its Slow Streets program.

Vision 2028 Goals:

1.1 Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs.

1.2 Improve safety on the transit system and reduce roadway collisions and injuries.

1.2 Improve connectivity to provide seamless journeys.

3.2 Catalyze transit-oriented communities and help stabilize communities where these investments are made.

4.1 Work with partners to build trust and make decisions that support the goals of the Vision 2028 Plan (including improving multi-modal transportation options).

5.1 Leverage funding and staff resources to accelerate the achievements of goals and initiatives prioritized in the Vision 2028 Plan.



Best Practices:

Oakland Department of Transportation (OakDOT) launched a "Slow Streets" initiative designating 74 miles of neighborhood streets to bikes, pedestrians, wheelchair users and local vehicles only across the city. Oakland utilized streets identified in its 2019 bike plan update, and relied on a "light-touch" approach that leveraged volunteers and existing in-house resources.¹⁹

Philadelphia, Boston, San Francisco and Los Angeles and dozens of other cities have also enacted some amount of Slow Streets/Safe Streets/Open Streets.

¹⁹ See oaklandca.gov/news/2020/city-of-oakland-announces-oakland-slow-streets-program-starting-saturday-to-enable-safer-walking-cycling

3. Create Safe Environments

Recommendation:

Test, adopt and publicize new cleaning methods, such as UV, Ozone and autonomous robotic floor cleaners, while also increasing publicity of existing cleaning practices, especially through videos.

Justification:

Testing and implementing new cleaning will advance health and safety for riders and staff; publicizing current and new cleaning practices will help inform and reassure riders currently using the system and those who will be making transportation decisions as Safer At Home orders are modified. Using innovative cleaning technologies will maximize productivity and offer revenue generating opportunities. For example, utilizing robotic floor cleaners allows maintenance crews additional time to clean other station areas while the autonomous robots clean and sweep floors; thereby, increasing productivity.

Equity:

Enhanced cleaning will benefit Metro's riders who are primarily low-income and people of color, as well as riders with underlying health conditions that make them more at risk of COVID-19. Look for opportunities for small and DBE businesses in any new cleaning contracts and study side effects of new cleaning methods to protect sensitive riders/staff.

Vision 2028 Goals:

- 1.2 Improve safety on the transit system.
- 2.2 Improve legibility, ease of use, and trip information (including safety and comfort) on the transit system.
- 2.3 Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points.
- 5.6 Foster and maintain a strong safety culture.

Cost Estimate:

Our Annual Maintenance Program budget for FY2021 for Bus Maintenance, Rail Fleet Services, and Maintenance & Engineering totals approximately \$250 million. Metro is working on implementing additional end-of-line cleaning on Bus and Rail vehicles, buses, and stations. This includes more cleaning equipment to conduct deep cleaning and maintenance of rail terminals and stations and potential contracted cleaning services. The estimated cost for enhanced cleaning is an additional \$2.2 million per quarter. Metro also recently ordered 30 portable UV light tripods at a cost of \$168k for testing on our buses, rail vehicles, and facilities.

Update:

Metro Operations is conducting research and engineering work on additional methods to disinfect infrastructure. Metro will be piloting the use of UV lights in August/September 2020 after devices become available and training is complete. The agency is also investigating other cleaning methods including electrostatic foggers, autonomous floor cleaning robots and copper solutions. Additionally, Metro is researching how to equip buses and trains with hand sanitizer dispensers. This is important because while cleaning can be done on vehicles that are out of service, surfaces can become contaminated by riders with COVID during revenue service so hand washing and/or use of hand sanitizer are encouraged.

Best Practices:

NY MTA has launched a \$1M UV light pilot program to kill COVID-19 on buses and trains and at stations.²¹

Port Authority Trans-Hudson (PATH) authorities are investigating effectiveness of smaller UV equipment that is easier to get on train cars.²²

Pittsburgh International Airport is utilizing autonomous robots with Ultraviolet Light Technology.²³

²⁰ See <https://www.cnn.com/2020/05/20/us/new-york-transit-uv-light-trnd/index.html>

²¹ See <https://www.govtech.com/fs/transportation/Austrian-Transit-Offers-Ridership-Lessons-to-US-Agencies.html>

²² See <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2020/05/05/2027486/o/en/Pittsburgh-International-Airport-to-Become-first-U-S-Airport-to-Utilize-Autonomous-Robots-with-Ultraviolet-Light-Technology.html>



4. Masks for our Riders

Recommendation:

Explore ways to distribute masks to riders, to help the recently-introduced face covering requirement succeed. Distribution of masks can focus on hot spots identified by bus operators, riders and public health data.

Justification:

Distributing masks can increase compliance with face covering requirements, enhancing health benefits. It can also help avoid conflicts and uncertainty if customers try to ride without masks.

Equity:

This presents an equity opportunity through focused distribution in areas with high concentrations of COVID-19 cases, particularly where residents lack resources to purchase masks, as well as through the use of culturally competent education to implement the new face covering requirement, rather than law enforcement, which might target marginalized communities.

Vision 2028 Goals:

- 1.1 Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs.
- 1.2 Improve safety on the transit system.
- 2.2 Improve legibility, ease of use, and trip information (including safety and comfort) on the transit system.
- 2.3 Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points.
- 5.6 Foster and maintain a strong safety culture.

Cost Estimate:

Approximately \$25,000 a week.

Update:

Metro distributed masks throughout the month of June 2020 at twelve stations chosen based on high ridership. Beginning the week of July 6, 2020 through the month of August 2020, Metro will deploy 11 street teams to ride the system and hand out free masks to all riders. Additionally, Metro staff has identified 8 major stops that it will send street teams to distribute masks. These stops were selected based on overlaying Metro's system map with Equity Focused Communities, high traffic stops, and areas in LA County with high rates of COVID-19 cases.

Best Practices:

As supply chains have improved, and with new CDC guidance, several transit agencies across the nation have begun distributing free masks to customers. Some are relying on ambassadors to distribute, and others are installing mask dispensers on buses. These agencies include SEPTA, CapMetro, Greensboro Transit, Montgomery County's Ride On Bus System, Detroit DOT, RTC Rashoe, etc.²³

²³ See <https://whyy.org/articles/septa-is-giving-masks-to-riders-after-backlash-to-face-covering-mandate/>;
<https://whyy.org/articles/septa-is-giving-masks-to-riders-after-backlash-to-face-covering-mandate/>;
<https://spectrumlocalnews.com/tx/austin/news/2020/04/18/capmetro-to-distribute-free-masks-to-riders>;
https://www.greensboro.com/news/local_news/greensboro-transit-agency-offers-free-cloth-masks-to-riders-on-thursday/article_f8fb9b3c-15ae-5e4e-8fo8-7c97f2ob0868.html;
<https://www.silive.com/coronavirus/2020/07/mta-rolls-out-ppe-vending-machines-at-some-subway-stations.html>;
https://www.greensboro.com/news/local_news/greensboro-transit-agency-offers-free-cloth-masks-to-riders-on-thursday/article_f8fb9b3c-15ae-5e4e-8fo8-7c97f2ob0868.html;
<https://www.silive.com/coronavirus/2020/07/mta-rolls-out-ppe-vending-machines-at-some-subway-stations.html>



5. Allow Mask Vending

Recommendation:

Supplement mask distribution by licensing vendors to sell masks and potentially personal hand sanitizer at some of our stations. Metro should still continue mask distribution based on equity and need. The agency should establish a vending program with a quick process to license vendors at some stations where we are not distributing free masks.

Justification:

There is increasing evidence that public transit is fairly safe to ride if there is widespread use of face coverings by riders and operators as shown in Hong Kong, etc.... (See page 10). Allowing one sidewalk vendor of masks per station at some Metro stations where the agency is not distributing free masks will allow riders who forgot to bring a mask to purchase one before riding. This program will also help mask vendors, some of whom were previously selling food before sidewalk food vending was banned due to COVID-19.

Equity:

This presents an equity opportunity by supporting street vendors who tend to be low-income, immigrants and people of color. These demographics continually to be disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, especially those who have not been allowed to go back to work at their old locations. In organizing a mask vending program, Metro should take account of lessons learned from the MacArthur Park Community Market and engage Street Vendor leaders.

Vision 2028 Goals:

- 1.1 Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs.
- 1.2 Improve safety on the transit system.
- 2.2 Improve legibility, ease of use, and trip information (including safety and comfort) on the transit system.
- 2.3 Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points.
- 5.5 Expand opportunities for small and emerging businesses
- 5.6 Foster and maintain a strong safety culture.

Cost Estimate:

Would require ½ of a FTE to administer a program of one vendor per station at approximately 20 stations. This would cost approximately \$42,000 per year.

Best Practices:

LA Metro introduced a pilot program to permit street vendors to sell goods on the plaza of the MacArthur Park station. This is a potential model to emulate for the vending program.

6. Contactless Payment

Recommendation:

Rapidly introduce a contactless, visual ticket purchase and payment option in Metro's new official app, Transit, as an option to accompany TAP card payment. To smooth out demand, make off-peak service free or discounted for a limited, promotional period when there is a rise in ridership and crowding on Metro bus and rail. Note: this is not intended to change enforcement practices.

Justification:

A non-contact way to pay will reduce physical risks and can help reassure customers. An additional way to pay may also increase payments during a period in which fares are not being enforced. A limited-time promotion with free or reduced non-peak fares can help encourage customer to download the Transit app and can help reduce crowding during peak times.

Equity:

This presents an equity opportunity by providing new, safer ways to pay. These modes will be accessible to all people with smart phones, regardless income, race, or other demographics, who can use the Transit app. It has been determined that this recommendation should not create any burdens at this time.

Vision 2028 Goals:

- 1.1 Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs.
- 1.2 Invest in a world-class bus system that is reliable, convenient, and attractive to more users for more trips.
- 1.2 Improve connectivity to provide seamless journeys.
- 1.2 Improve safety on the transit system.
- 2.2 Improve legibility, ease of use, and trip information (including safety and comfort) on the transit system.
- 2.3 Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points.
- 5.6 Foster and maintain a strong safety culture.

Cost Estimate:

Revenue positive. Revenue from fare purchases that would not otherwise be made because many bus riders are currently not paying for rides due to rear boarding during the pandemic. Transaction fees from visual ticketing option will not exceed current fees paid to Cubic.

Update:

Metro has started discussions with Transit on picking a third-party payment partner to allow this contactless payment function. Launch of contactless payment is on hold briefly while Metro determines contractual and legal obligations with the current payment contractor.



Best Practices:

At least nine transit agencies have accelerated or started the process of introducing mobile ticketing in response to COVID-19. Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority, for example, is already integrated with Transit, and moved up the launch of mobile ticketing to May.

7. Virtual Connection

Recommendation:

Metro should refresh, share and follow protocols for online public meetings. This should include establishing accounts with software platforms with features needed to ensure inclusive and equitable community engagement, such as closed-captioning in multiple languages, chat, hand raising, polling, break out rooms, and moderation tools. To ensure that stakeholders who may not have internet access to internet, Metro will deploy staff or vehicles and work with local partners, to provide free Wi-Fi hotspots and potentially laptops/ tablets to help community members participate in online meetings.

Justification:

With public meetings having moved completely online due to the pandemic, Metro should ensure that all staff and projects hosting online external meetings are following best practices and agency protocols. Adding new software platforms to the Agency's set of online meeting tools will be beneficial if they bring useful accessibility features. Not all LA county residents have reliable online access, so bringing hotspots to the community can in certain cases provide more opportunity for participation.

Equity:

The combination of a virtual platform with translation, accesibility features and potential deplotment of Wi-Fi hotspots supports better access for marginalized and vulnerable communities, including those who do not have internet, those who speak various languages and/ or have hearing impairments.

Vision 2028 Goals:

- 1.1 Expand the transportation system as responsibly and quickly as possible
- 3.3 Genuine public and community engagement to achieve better mobility outcomes for the people of LA County
- 4.1 Work with partners to build trust and make decisions that support the goals of the Vision 2028 plan
- 5.4 Apply prudent commercial business practices to create a more efficient agency

Cost Estimate:

\$3200 for ten Zoom licenses. Each Wi-Fi hotspot costs \$50 and can be taken to different meetings. If taken by a staff, the cost would be time for that staffer; if the wifi was located in a bus it would require a full shift and cost approximately \$1400. Using a bus would only make sense if there was no other method or location to provide a wifi hotspot.

Best Practices:

Sacramento Regional Transit is providing free wifi hotspots.²⁴

Washington's Pierce Transit is launching a pilot program to provide free mobile Wi-Fi hot spots for students who do not have reliable Internet access but still need to complete remote school assignments during Washington's "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order.²⁵

²⁴ See <https://www.kcra.com/article/sacramento-transit-buses-free-wifi-hot-spots/32371876#>

²⁵ See <https://www.metro-magazine.com/10112745/pierce-transit-using-buses-to-create-wi-fi-hot-spots-for-students>

8. Fresh Air, Safe Travel.

Recommendation:

Assess options to improve air-flow and filtering to reduce risk of COVID-19 transmission. This could include keeping bus windows open and enhanced cleaning and filtering of HVAC systems on vehicles, in stations and buildings.

Justification:

Evidence increasingly suggests that most spread of COVID-19 is through airborne droplets that occurs during sustained, close contact of people when people cough or talk loudly in enclosed spaces. Improving airflow and filtering in vehicles and buildings should help reduce transmission.

Equity:

This will help protect Metro riders, who are mainly low-income persons of color.

Vision 2028 Goals:

- 1.2 Improve safety on the transit system.
- 2.2 Improve legibility, ease of use, and trip information (including safety and comfort) on the transit system.
- 2.3 Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points.
- 5.6 Foster and maintain a strong safety culture.

Cost Estimate:

This is a new issue so more research is needed. There are likely associated costs to upgrade HVAC systems and filters and add new capabilities.

Best Practices:

East Japan Railway encourages passengers to open windows and educates them about air flow from ventilation systems, opening and closing of doors at stops, and air flow from windows to provide customers with reassurance. They also ask customers to refrain from talking while riding.²⁶

Bus drivers in Jerusalem have been instructed by the Transportation Ministry to keep windows open to allow for an exchange of air.²⁷

APTA recommends that windows be cracked open while revenue vehicles are in use and to maximize ventilation rates on HVAC systems.²⁸

²⁶ Akiko Ito, JREast Representative to APTA; Director, East Japan Railway Company. Via APTA.

²⁷ See <https://hamodia.com/2020/03/09/coronavirus-bus-rules-windows-open-no-standing-stay-away-driver/>

²⁸ See https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/COVID-19_Transit_Guide_FINAL_04132020.pdf





Phase Two: Relaunch



9. Matching Service with Demand

Recommendation:

Restore more frequent transit service to stay ahead of demand, and retain rear door boarding as an option.

Justification:

Restoring more frequent bus and rail service in stages and retaining rear door boarding on buses as an option, can both make transit competitive, and can allow physical distancing and reduce overcrowding. There is evidence that service cuts during past crises led to long term reductions in ridership.

Equity:

This presents an equity opportunity by prioritizing more frequent service and retaining rear door boarding on lines currently experiencing overcrowding, which can help essential workers and our primarily low-income, riders of color through mobility gains and health protection.

Cost Estimate:

Increasing service will have costs, but the early increase phased increases will still be less Revenue Service Hours (RSH) was at 7.0M annualized levels on Dec 2019. Post COVID the April 2020 RSH was at 5.0M annualized levels.

Phase 1 plans for 5.5M RSH Annualized.

Vision 2028 Goals:

- 1.2 Improve safety on the transit system.
- 1.3 Develop simplified, sustainable, and comprehensive pricing policies to support the provision of equitable, affordable, and high-quality transportation services.
- 2.2 Improve legibility, ease of use, and trip information (including safety and comfort) on the transit system.
- 2.3 Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points.
- 5.6 Foster and maintain a strong safety culture.

Update:

Metro entered phase 1 of its four-stage service recovery plan on June 21, 2020. This phase increased bus service on 95 bus routes, representing an 11% increase in bus service.²⁹

Best Practices:

Pittsburg Port Authority is assigning longer, articulated buses to trips with the highest ridership to allow riders to maintain a safe distance from each other. It is also maintaining off-peak service.³⁰

Boston's MBTA has yet to dramatically reduce service despite ridership declines in the range of 75-90%. The MBTA is also adding frequency on busier bus routes to ensure riders and transit workers can maintain safe physical distance on board. Routes where the MBTA is reducing service include the weekday express routes, where most of the riders are now working from home.³⁰

²⁹ See <https://thesource.metro.net/2020/06/18/service-changes-begin-this-sunday-june-21-with-more-trips-on-95-bus-lines/>

³⁰ See post-gazette.com/news/transportation/2020/04/07/Port-Authority-nonessential-riders-COVID-19-bigger-buses-pittsburgh/stories/202004070119



10. Better Bike Share

Recommendation:

Study options to enhance the Metro Bike Share program, with goals of more locations (especially equity-focused communities) and more use.

Two options to study are:

- > Rebid contract to third party operator or develop a business partnership to manage program under a cost effective or neutral configuration.
- > Bring Metro Bike Share operations and maintenance 'in-house' to performed by Metro staff.

Justification:

During COVID-19, Metro Bike Share has seen a lower reduction in use than Metro bus, rail and parking, suggesting that there is interest in bike share as a physically-distanced transportation option. Many cities around the world are promoting biking as an alternative to driving during and after the pandemic. Other bike share systems in the region are struggling, providing an opportunity to reexamine bike share in LA County.

Equity:

Improving bike share can enhance equity if more bikes are available in areas where low-income residents and marginalized communities live and work. This improved service should be accompanied by safety improvements to reduce collisions and injuries, which tend to be higher in those neighborhoods. Study should examine locations, cost and payment options and messaging/promotion to diverse communities.

Vision 2028 Goals:

- 1.1 Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs.
- 1.2 Improve connectivity to provide seamless journeys.
- 3.2 Catalyze transit-oriented communities and help stabilize communities where these investments are made.
- 4.1 Work with partners to build trust and make decisions that support the goals of the Vision 2028 Plan (including improving multi-modal transportation options).
- 5.1 Leverage funding and staff resources to accelerate the achievements of goals and initiatives prioritized in this Vision 2028 Plan.

Cost Estimate:

The cost estimate will be determined as part of the study, which is being conducted in house on staff time.

Update:

Metro's Planning Department is managing the study to improve and restructure the bike share program. Results are due in September 2020.



Best Practices:

Capital Bike Share in the Washington D.C. region has made rides of up to 30 minutes free for essential workers during the pandemic.³¹

³¹ See capitalbikeshare.com/blog/essential-workers-program

11. More Biking

Recommendation:

Promote quick roll-out of more bike infrastructure and bikes. This could include partnering with cities on strategies for rapid deployment of bike improvements; fully funding Metro Active Transportation Cycle 1; accelerate Measure M regional bike capital projects; and developing and launching a pilot to distribute bicycles.

Justification:

Encouraging more cycling in Metro's service area can help prevent overcrowding on transit during a time when fewer riders are allowed on each bus and trains. It can also help avoid a surge in driving when Safer At Home orders are lifted, contributing to Metro's visionary strategic plan outcome of fewer single occupancy vehicle trips.

Equity:

In supporting bike programs, Metro should learn from existing pilots, research and community recommendations related to community outreach, over-policing and racial profiling when it comes to installing active transportation improvements in neighborhoods. We also recommend community education to ensure safe riding, and the potential to donate unclaimed bikes collected on our system and at stations to offer bicycles to communities of high-need.

Vision 2028 Goals:

1.1 Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs.

1.1 Expand the transportation system as responsibly and quickly as possible

1.2 Improve connections to provide seamless journeys.

1.2 Improve safety on the transit system and reduce roadway collisions and injuries

4.1 Work with partners to build trust and make decisions that support the goals of the Vision 2028 Plan.

Cost Estimate:

MAT Cycle 1, and capital projects would draw from existing funding. Bike donation program is estimated at \$120,000 to develop and launch.



Best Practices:

Paris has plans to create 650 km (over 400 miles) of bike lanes, 50 km (30 miles) that were rapidly installed almost overnight. Mayor Hidalgo has recently announced that these 50 km bike lanes will become permanent, which will improve traffic flow and cycling connectivity.³² Paris is also subsidizing around \$550 for citizens to purchase electric bikes and 50 euros towards bike repairs. Public bike rentals are seeing record demand.

England is reallocating public space to cyclists by widening pavements and creating cycle and bus-only corridors. The government is investing \$310 million toward this effort.³³

Milan created 35 kilometers of new paths for cyclists and pedestrians, and the Italian government introduced a 70% subsidy for buying bikes.³³

³² See <http://www.rfi.fr/en/france/20200701-paris-temporary-bike-lanes-to-become-permanent-after-hidalgo-re-election-mayor-green-pollution-cars>

³³ See <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/12/business/paris-bicycles-commute-coronavirus.html>

12. Working from Home

Recommendation:

Update Metro telecommute policy to allow more staff to telecommute – even after the pandemic; and engage major employers, agencies and other stakeholders to expand telecommuting and implement staggered work hours where feasible.

Justification:

Telecommuting can help avoid a surge in single occupancy vehicle trips and congestion when more businesses open. It can also reduce crowding and related COVID-19 spread in offices, and reduce costs of leases and office supplies.

Equity:

This presents an equity opportunity by expanding job opportunities for people with disabilities, and workers who can work from home while caring for children and the elderly or sick. Marginalized communities tend to be less represented amongst workers that can work from home, so employers should track the demographic details of telecommuters to understand who benefits and if there are unintended consequences.

Vision 2028 Goals:

1.3 Manage transportation demand in a fair and equitable manner.

4.1 Work with partners to build trust and make decisions that support the goals of the Vision 2028 Plan.

4.2 Drive mobility agendas, discussions, and policies at the state, regional and national levels.

5.4 Apply prudent commercial business practices to create a more effective agency.

Cost Estimate:

Employee training to maximize effectiveness of telecommuting: approximately \$30,000. Savings from reduced need for office space and supplies could range from \$1.8 million to \$15 million.

Update:

Staff are working on a new telecommute policy. These recommendations are based partly on findings from a survey on telecommuting designed by Metro's OEI and Duke University, as well as on telecommute practices adopted by Metro departments during the Pandemic.

Best Practices:

The U.S. federal government, the nation's largest employer, has issued new guidance on liberalizing telework and has urged other agencies to maximize telework flexibilities.³⁷

Large private employers, including Twitter, Amazon, Microsoft, Facebook, Google, Apple, Airbnb, Lyft, Chevron, Square, The Washington Post, The New York Times and the Los Angeles Times have either encouraged or mandated employees to telecommute as a result of the outbreak, and some have announced that options for remote work will be made permanent.³⁸

Twitter and Square have announced that employees have the option of working from home indefinitely.³⁹

Facebook has announced plans to shift to a remote workforce over the next decade, with 45,000 employees expected to work from home.⁴⁰

³⁵ See brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2020/03/17/covid-19-makes-the-benefits-of-telework-obvious/

³⁶ See latimes.com/business/story/2020-03-12/amazon-google-workers-work-from-home-coronavirus

³⁷ See <https://www.usnews.com/news/cities/articles/2020-06-29/how-teleworking-may-accelerate-the-shift-away-from-big-cities>

³⁸ See <https://www.usnews.com/news/cities/articles/2020-06-29/how-teleworking-may-accelerate-the-shift-away-from-big-cities>



13. Faster Buses

Recommendation:

Partner with local jurisdictions to accelerate implementation of bus-only lanes and other speed and reliability measures in areas that Operations has identified as past congestion hot spots. Pursue consistent and equitable enforcement of bus-only lanes to realize the mobility benefits of existing and future lanes.

Justification:

The current period of lighter than usual vehicle traffic is a chance to implement more bus lanes with fewer immediate conflicts with traffic and parking. Bus-only lanes will allow greater speed and reliability, helping keep buses competitive with single occupancy vehicles. Faster travel can also contribute to more frequency and less crowding.

Equity:

This offers an equity opportunity by prioritizing bus lanes on routes used by essential workers, who are primarily low-income, people of color and those that connect equity-focused communities. To allow input from and to get information to ESL populations and riders without smart phones, staff can streamline outreach, rapidly introduce lanes and survey riders for feedback.

Cost Estimate:

Planning and installation of lanes and priority measures are an existing work program.

Update:

Metro is collaborating with LADOT to install bus lanes on 5th street and 6th street in Downtown Los Angeles, busy transit corridors which carry up to 80 buses per hour.⁴¹ Protected bike lanes will also be installed on portions of these streets. A Metro-City of L.A. working group continues to analyze potential prioritization measures for other corridors.

Vision 2028 Goals:

- 1.1 Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs.
- 1.2 Invest in a world-class bus system that is reliable, convenient, and attractive to more users for more trips.
- 4.1 Work with partners to build trust and make decisions that support the goals of the Vision 2028 Plan.

Best Practices:

MBTA is considering adding more dedicated bus lanes to speed up travel to meet expected demand as ridership slowly returns and congestion returns. MBTA believes that dedicated bus-only lanes will allow buses to move faster, allowing the buses to make more trips with people safely spread out on the buses.³⁹

³⁹ See [wbur.org/bostonmix/2020/05/11/mbta-reopening-service-plan](https://www.wbur.org/bostonmix/2020/05/11/mbta-reopening-service-plan)

14. “We’re here for you.”

Recommendation:

Launch communication campaign with multiple goals as Safer At Home orders are relaxed, including:

- > boost brand and ridership
- > encourage use of non-SOV services
- > encourage safe use of services
- > include equity- i.e., everyone is welcome

Justification:

A communications campaign is an opportunity to address and inform riders and the public about how Metro is bringing back more service, how riders can travel safely, and to refresh Metro’s brand in the context of all of the major changes and events of 2020.

Equity:

This could provide an equity opportunity if the campaign messaging and outreach is focused on targeting and hearing from historically marginalized/underserved communities. The campaign should acknowledge those who kept using Metro services for essential trips. Messaging should also reflect input from riders gathered through customer surveys.

Vision 2028 Goals:

2.2 Improve legibility, ease of use, and trip information on the transit system

2.3 Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points

3.3 Commit to genuine public and community engagement to achieve better mobility outcomes for the people of LA County.

Cost Estimate:

\$500,000



Best Practices:

NY MTA has launched a “Welcome Back” PSA Campaign as New York reopens. A public service announcement that reminds customers they must wear a face covering when riding public transportation was played across 22 radio stations in the five borough area, in English and in Spanish.⁴⁰

CTA has launched a new ridership information dashboard to help customers travel smarter and more safely. The dashboard will provide a bus crowding report that shows available capacity of each route is. CTA is also posting new signs and stickers to encourage use of masks and social distancing.⁴¹

⁴⁰ See <http://www.mta.info/press-release/mta-headquarters/mta-launches-%E2%80%99welcome-back%E2%80%99-psa-campaign-new-york-reopens>

⁴¹ See <https://www.masstransitmag.com/technology/miscellaneous/press-release/21142380/chicago-transit-authority-cta-cta-launches-new-ridership-information-dashboard-customer-awareness-campaign>

15. Customer Ambassadors

Recommendation:

Deploy non-security staff at stations as customer service agents and ambassadors to encourage safe riding (mask usage, distancing, etc.). The design of this program and roles for ambassador can draw from recommendations from Metro Leadership Academy teams and their capstone projects; from customer survey results; and from public conversations and Metro board motions on how to improve Metro security.

Justification:

Expanding the number of non-security staff who can help and interact with riders can advance three goals. It can help riders use services safely. It can provide better customer service in general and address specific concerns identified through customer surveys. And using more non-security staff can also address concerns on disparities in policing.

Equity:

This presents an equity opportunity through utilizing non-law enforcement to ensure that black, Latinx and other riders who are not comfortable with law-enforcement, feel safe approaching and listening to the customer service agents. Agents that speak various languages, are trained on cultural sensitivity and instructed to focus on education will maximize benefit for marginalized communities.

Vision 2028 Goals:

- 2.1 Improve Security
- 2.2 Improve legibility, ease of use, and trip information on the transit system
- 2.3 Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points
- 3.3 Commit to genuine public and community engagement to achieve better mobility outcomes for the people of LA County.

Cost Estimate:

Annual cost estimates from leadership academy proposals for staff, equipment + training vary depending on the source and number of staff as well as equipment and training needs:

- > \$55,000 for 25 repurposed FTEs
- > \$740,000 for 25 part-time staff
- > \$7.4 million for 50 new FTEs

Best Practices:

Phoenix's Valley Metro has implemented an ambassador program successfully utilizing "Customer Experience Coordinators" who engage with riders, assist them however possible as well as to support system safety, ensure station cleanliness and, ultimately, contribute to an overall positive experience for customers.⁴²



⁴² See <https://www.valleymetro.org/news/customer-experience-coordinators-welcome-riders>

16. New Mobility for the Way Forward.

Recommendation:

Pilot and expand alternative services following new models, such as the MicroTransit and Mobility on Demand contracts. This may include partnerships with public, private and community operators for complimentary programming.

Justification:

To improve mobility in the region and supplement the Metro network, piloting new and alternative services can be cost effective and offer new learning on non-SOV options.

Equity:

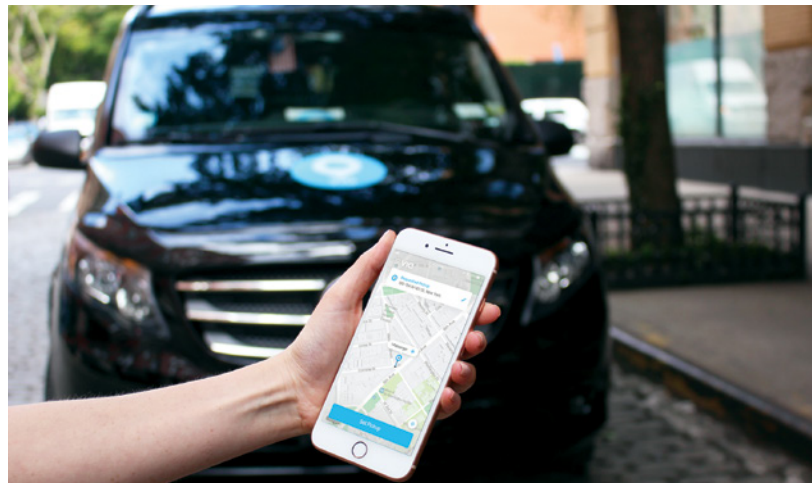
As with Metro's on-demand pilots, this recommendation can and will prioritize equity-focused communities and people with challenges accessing either traditional transit or private services.

Vision 2028 Goals:

- 1.1 Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs.
- 1.1 Expand the transportation system as responsibly and quickly as possible.
- 1.2 Improve connectivity to provide seamless journeys; explore opportunities for expanding access to shared, demand-responsive transportation options for everyone.
- 2.3 Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points.

Update and Cost Estimate:

OEI is developing a request for information for low or no-cost partnerships. It will be released to mobility providers soon.



Best Practices:

LA Metro's on-demand services have effectively adapted and adjusted service models to accommodate essential trips for customers who need to access services, such as grocery stores, pharmacies and medical centers.⁴³

Portland DOT has temporarily waived e-scooter daily fees in exchange for Spin, reducing the cost of a ride by about 50%. Healthcare workers can apply online for free, unlimited 30-minute Spin rentals and a helmet.⁴⁴

⁴³ See thesource.metro.net/2020/03/25/metros-mobility-on-demand-service-now-running-point-to-point-trips-within-service-zones/.

⁴⁴ See week.com/bikes/2020/04/07/the-portland-bureau-of-transportation-is-slashing-fees-for-biketown-and-e-scooter-rides/.



Phase Three:

Recover



17. Reimagining Projects

Recommendation:

Prioritize and re-examine major capital projects in a recovery framework based on criteria, such as enhancing mobility and ridership, equity and Title VI compliance, health and economic development. Projects can be examined and prioritized to advance or be placed on hold; to accelerate or decelerate; and through adjustments to scope, mode and/or delivery method.

Justification:

Budget challenges, the economic and job benefits of capital construction, and the opportunity for a new normal of mobility without congestion provide an opportunity to re-examine Metro's capital program and maximize the positive impacts of each project and the system as a whole.

Equity:

Prioritizing capital projects solely based on fiscal factors could lead to decisions that negatively impact equity-focused communities or cause Title VI challenges. A broader analysis should include equity and also consider impacts to Small Business Enterprise, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise and Disabled Veterans Business Enterprise Programs.

Vision 2028 Goals:

- 1.1 Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs.
- 1.1 Expand the transportation system as responsibly and quickly as possible.
- 1.2 Invest in a world-class bus system that is reliable, convenient, and attractive to more users for more trips.
- 1.2 Improve connectivity to provide seamless journeys.
- 3.1 Leverage its transit investments to catalyze transit-oriented communities and help stabilize neighborhoods where these investments are made.
- 5.1 Leverage funding and staff resources to accelerate the achievement of goals and initiatives prioritized in the Vision 2028 Plan.
- 5.2 Exercise good public policy judgment and sound fiscal stewardship.

Cost Estimate:

The initial cost is for staff time for the development of the Assessment tool. The assessment tool is potentially cost neutral – it depends on whether any projects move from being temporarily deferred to advancing or whether any projects are improved by adjustments to scope, mode and/or delivery.

Update:

The Recovery Task Forces' major capital projects subcommittee is working with various departments across Metro to develop an evaluation framework that could help to inform the decision making process of Metro leadership on what projects should be temporarily deferred or move forward; and whether projects can be improved in the mid-to-long term.

Key areas of consideration identified are:

- > Ridership Assessment
- > Equity & Inclusion – Equity Focus Communities (EFC)
- > Economic Impact to Local and Regional Economy
- > High Level Risk Assessment
- > Opportunities to Introduce New Initiatives or Innovation

Best Practices:

King County Metro, an agency with a similarly large capital infrastructure program, has also been negatively impacted by tax revenue shortfalls. KCM has projected a 30-40% reduction in their Capital Improvement Program. To tackle this, KCM developed criteria and is using a newly created Mobility Framework, an equity focused policy tool, to re-evaluate their capital program.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ See <https://www.theurbanist.org/2020/06/23/deeper-transit-cuts-loom-as-metro-faces-serious-financial-constraints-in-2021-and-2022/> and KCM's "Update on Metro's COVID-19 Response and Recovery: Regional Transit Committee and Mobility & Environment Committee" dated June 17, 2020

18. Homes for All

Recommendation:

Expand social service resources and partnerships, including on-site services, to increase the ability to connect unhoused riders on the Metro system with services and housing.

Justification:

The presence of people taking non-essential trips prevents social distancing, threatens the public health of all riders and makes some feel uncomfortable. Research shows that enforcement is not effective in addressing homelessness. Transit agencies cannot solve the problem of homelessness alone, but with the right policies, partnerships and programs, they can create a safer and more comfortable environment for all transit users. Additionally, helping unhoused riders find housing and services contributes to Metro's strategic plan goal 3.4 of helping solve homelessness.

Equity:

This presents an equity opportunity by helping unhoused people find housing and services, and allows essential riders to socially distance and reduce the public health risks.

Vision 2028 Goals:

2.1 Improve security.

2.3 Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points.

3.4 Play a strong leadership role in efforts to address homelessness in LA County.

4.1 Work with partners to build trust and make decisions that support the goals of the Vision 2028 Plan.

Cost Estimate:

The recent new partnership were no-cost relationships. Substantially expanding outreach would have costs; for benchmarking, the current main service contract is \$5 million per year. The exploration of use of Metro property is in an early stage.

Update:

Metro is continuing to help place homeless riders in partnership with service providers. The agency also added two new service provider partnerships and is exploring use of Metro properties for housing and/or safe overnight parking, which includes research on cost-effective housing models and partnerships with Community Based Organizations.





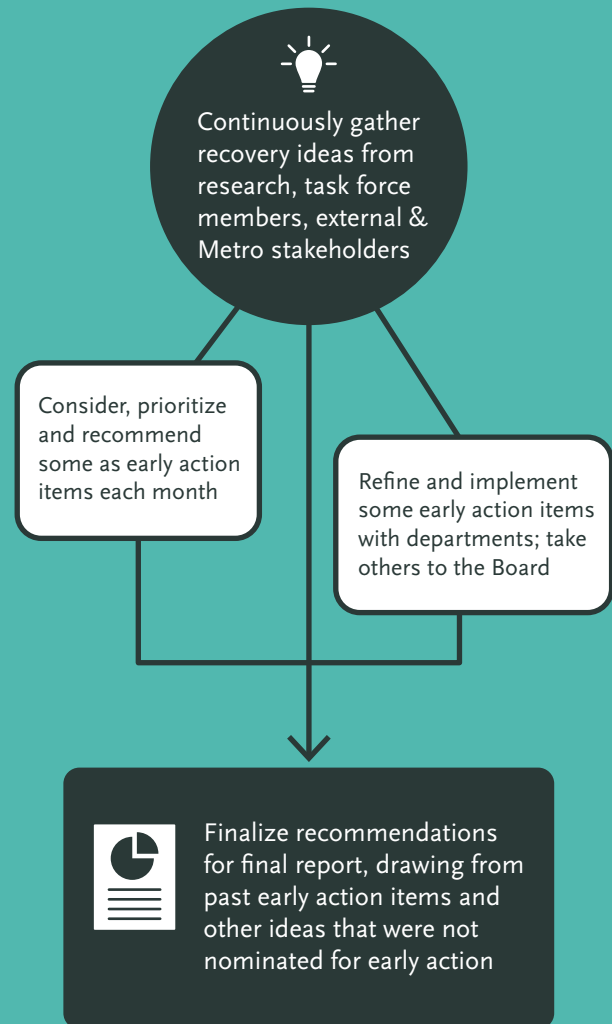
Work Plan and Next Steps

The COVID-19 Recovery Task Force was established to develop a recovery plan and to recommend early action items. Decision makers in Metro, including the Board of Directors, Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and CEO, will determine whether, how and when to implement recovery ideas.

To provide the best possible advice to Metro leaders, representatives of the task force will regularly update SLT and the Board on its progress. The task force will conduct outreach to the public and stakeholders to share recommendations and seek ideas that can contribute to the recovery plan.

The task force reserves the potential to bring forward early action items each month (May through September 2020). Some of these action items can be implemented by relevant departments. Others will require Board action, which can be initiated by the recommendations from the task force or by motions from Board members.

The task force's final report will bring together prior early action items along with other important, but less time-sensitive, recovery recommendations. The release of the report will provide another opportunity for Metro to make decisions and take actions. The task force intends to release the final report at the end of September 2020.



Contact Us



For additional information, to ask questions or provide comments, please use the following contact tools:



COVID19recovery@metro.net



metro.net/recovery