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

Metro

Board Report

File #: 2015-1495, **File Type:** Budget **Agenda Number:** 57.

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 15, 2015

SUBJECT: LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP) EDUCATION PROGRAM

ACTION: AMEND THE FY16 COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT BUDGET TO FUND THE LRTP EDUCATION PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED (6-0) amending the FY16 Budget to add $2,750,000 to the Communications Department budget to fund the **first phase of Metro's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Education Program.**

ISSUE

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority is updating its Long-Range Transportation Plan to include mobility priorities across the county. Accompanying the LRTP will be an expenditure plan for funding the improvements. Educating the public about the plan and the benefits of future mobility improvements is essential.

DISCUSSION

Metro has been collaborating with the various sub-area councils of governments on multi-modal transportation priorities for the future to enhance mobility and ease congestion. Communicating the county's overarching transportation strategies and corresponding projects to the public across the region is crucial.

The Metro Communications Team has developed a multi-faceted communications plan to educate the public about the LRTP and the long-term benefits to the region. This education campaign includes broad-based and targeted communication tactics to convey information effectively in the manner that reaches and resonates with the diverse audiences across the region.

To date, Metro has conducted some market research to generate feedback that will help frame the messaging platform and concepts for the education campaign.

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The public education campaign and funding to accomplish this effort will occur in two phases: an initial rollout from November 2015 through Board action on a plan to fund the LRTP, and a subsequent information program if the Board votes to pursue funding opportunities to implement the plan.

Goals

There are five overarching goals of the Education Program:

- To create greater visibility of Metro's transportation improvement projects and programs
- To educate the public about Metro's future plans to transform mobility across the county
- To engage regional partners and the public in the process to transform transportation
- To inspire confidence in Metro's programs, projects, service and leadership
- To build understanding of the funding necessary to implement future transportation improvements

The education program will be a two-pronged strategic approach: showing the progress the agency is delivering in transportation improvements, with much more still to do.

Two-Pronged Strategic Approach

Much Has Been Done

Over the past several years, Metro has been delivering a variety of mobility improvements across Los Angeles County. It is essential that the public is aware that their tax dollars are transforming the region through these improvements. Metro's Communications Team has already implemented a campaign called "In the Works" touting the infrastructure improvements spanning the county through public investment. Research shows that the campaign has resonated with the public, so the Communications Team will refresh this campaign and build on this already-effective theme.

There's Still More To Do

Despite the progress that has been made, more is necessary to position the county for future growth and transportation needs. The Communications Team will overlay the "In the Works" campaign with a new campaign to educate the public about the elements of the LRTP with the mission of moving Metro forward.

The campaign will occur through the functional areas of Metro's communications program: Marketing, Community Relations, Public Relations, Government Relations, Customer Relations and Customer Programs and Services.

The campaign will roll out through a variety of tactics including but not limited to bus and shelter ads; billboards; print advertising and newspaper inserts; safety education; transportation innovation industry forum; public meetings; telephone town hall meetings; news blogs and articles; newspaper

inserts; press events showcasing project progress, milestones and openings; radio spots; community events and festivals; speakers' bureau; stakeholder briefings; stakeholder messaging kits; cable access programming; educational and community video projects; social media campaigns; website updates and fact sheets.

Messaging Platform

Messaging the LRTP and Expenditure Plan is an ongoing, dynamic process that will evolve into an overarching theme created to reflect the thoughts and perspectives of the public. The Metro Team will continue to evaluate the outcome of public polls and focus groups and feedback from key stakeholders and regional partners to frame the messaging platform that will drive the Education Program.

Quality of Life (QoL) Report

Another key component of educating the public about the benefits of transportation improvements will come through the Quality of Life (QoL) Report. The development of the report is underway in the Planning Department and will be complete in spring 2016. The QoL Report will help educate the public on how the region is benefitting from the investments that have already been made through the current LRTP. This will aide messaging and the communications plan for informing the public during the LRTP Education Program.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Staff requests an amendment to the Communications Department FY2016 budget as follows: $2,500,000 in Cost Center 7140, Project 100055, $200,000 in Cost Center 7160, Project 100055, and $50,000 in Cost Center 7110, Project 100055, for a total amount of $2,750,000.

Impact to Budget

The source of funds for this project is Measure R Admin which is not eligible for Bus and Rail Operations.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The agency can disregard the effort of putting forth a proactive, multi-faceted education program. This is not recommended as it is crucial to start educating the public about the future plans for transportation improvements and the opportunity for the region to invest in transportation transformation for current and future generations. Also, the FY16 Communications Budget currently does not include funding for an overarching communications and marketing campaign.

NEXT STEPS

The Communications Team in collaboration with the Planning Department will fine tune the

messaging platform, communications plan and schedule for the Education Program, which will begin in November.

ATTACHMENTS

Budget worksheet outlining the costs associated with implementing the education campaign.

Attachment A - LRTP Communications Plan
Attachment B - Education Program Budget Worksheet

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Phillip A. Washington
Chief Executive Officer

10/1/2015

Communications/Education Plan Budget

| 2015 | | | | | | | | | | | | 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | |

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Long-Range Transportation Plan Education Program
October 1, 2015

PURPOSE
As the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) plans for future growth and transportation needs, educating and engaging the public about Metro's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is essential. This communications plan is designed to guide Metro's LRTP Education Program.

SITUATION ANALYSIS
LA Metro is updating its LRTP to improve mobility and quality of life for all Los Angeles County residents. The plan aims to provide a balanced transportation system that positions the county for future growth. The LRTP will articulate the transportation priorities for Los Angeles County for the next 40 years. The plan is being crafted through collaboration with the councils of governments (CoGs) from the county's nine sub-regions.

As Metro continues to expand its bus and rail system, build highway improvements, offer more service and bring new mobility to the county's communities, building momentum for implementing the long-range plan and building positive relationships with stakeholders are crucial to the agency's success. This plan outlines Metro's communications efforts, in partnership with regional stakeholders, to educate the public about the LRTP and provide an opportunity for the region to embrace the path forward. The overarching desired outcome is to build trust and confidence in the agency's current programs, projects and services, while also building support for Metro's vision for future transportation transformation across LA County.

GOALS
- To create greater visibility of Metro's transportation improvement projects and programs
- To educate the public about Metro's future plans to transform mobility across the county
- To engage regional partners and the public in the process to transform transportation
- To inspire confidence in Metro's programs, projects, service and leadership
- To build understanding of the funding necessary to implement future transportation improvements

MESSAGING PLATFORM
Messaging the LRTP and Expenditure Plan is an ongoing, dynamic process that will evolve into an overarching theme created to reflect the thoughts and perspectives of the public. The Metro Team will continue to evaluate the outcome of public polls and focus groups and feedback from

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key stakeholders and regional partners to frame the messaging platform that will drive the Education Program.

EDUCATION PROGRAM PROCESSES

While many elements will comprise the communications plan, four processes will guide the Education Program to communicate Metro's long-range planning and a path forward to implement the plan.

- **Expenditure Plan**
  The roadmap for the Expenditure Plan will articulate the funding and schedule to implement the plan through 2057. The Expenditure Plan will include project sequencing based on performance metrics used to evaluate the individual projects.

- **Impact of Public Investment**
  As an important part of reporting back to the public on the positive impacts of transportation investment, the Metro Team is preparing two key documents:
  - **Quality of Life Report**
    The Metro Countywide Planning Department is developing a Quality of Life (QoL) Report to showcase the benefits the region has realized thus far through transportation investment.

  - **Annual Report**
    The Communications Department has developed a Metro Annual Report to the community on the current status of the agency, its financial stewardship, progress of its programs and projects and accomplishments. The content of the report will help frame the key points for the LRTP Education Program.

- **Stakeholder Engagement**
  Collaborating with regional stakeholders will occur throughout the Education Program. Continuing a dialogue with the Councils of Governments (CoGs), elected officials, the business community and other regional partners will be important to engage county leaders and build consensus for a future transportation plan.

- **Public Engagement**
  Engaging the public will also occur throughout the program. Metro will continue feedback mechanisms to solicit the public's opinions and perspectives, which will be a key component in framing the mobility priorities for the region. Public polling, focus groups, public meetings and telephone town hall meetings will be part of the information gathering process to ensure that Metro aligns its communications with the perceptions of the public.

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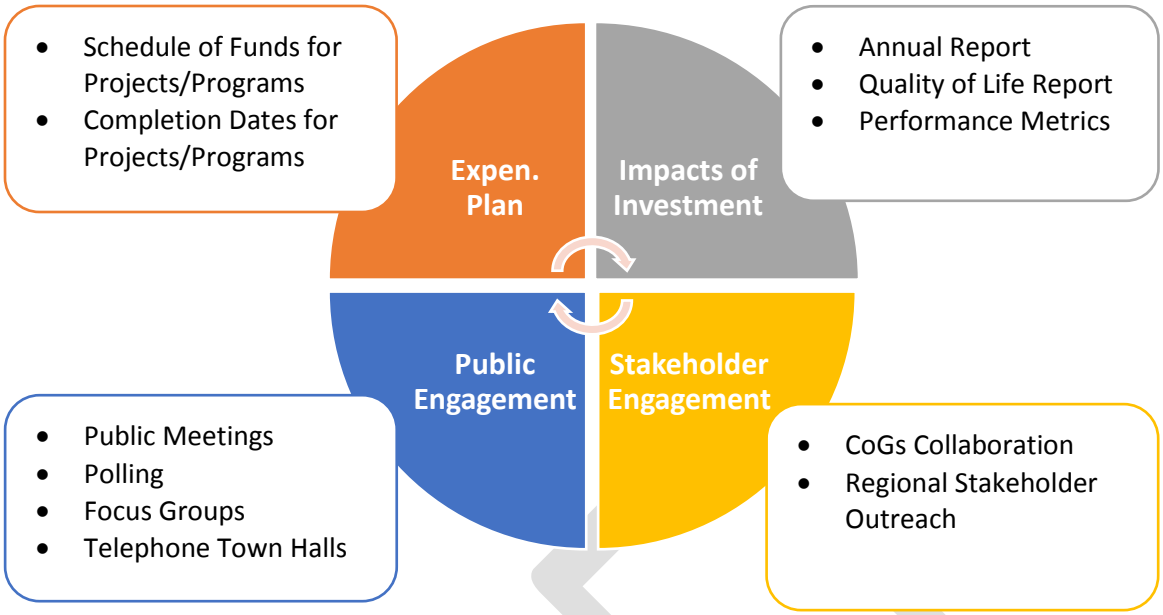

AUDIENCES

Educating the public about the county's future transportation plans will occur through mass communications as well as targeted messaging.

Internal

Metro Board of Directors
Board Staff
Metro Senior Leadership Team
Metro Staff (union and non-union)
Metro Contractors

External

Congressional Delegation
Governor's Office
State Legislature
Local Elected Officials
Local, State and Federal Staff
Public Agency Partners
Business Community
Chambers of Commerce
Environmental Coalitions
Small and Disadvantaged Business Community
Labor Unions
K-12 Schools
Community Colleges

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Universities
Local and National Media
Transit Advocates
Senior Organizations
Service Clubs and Organizations
Disabled Community
Neighborhood Groups
Social Service Organizations

STRATEGIC APPROACH

The Education Campaign Communications Plan will roll out through a two-phased approach, first showing the progress of Metro's programs, projects and services, then transitioning to the work still yet to accomplish to meet the region's future transportation needs.

Two-Phased Strategic Approach

Much Has Been Done

Over the past several years, Metro has been delivering a variety of mobility improvements across Los Angeles County. It is essential that the public is aware that their tax dollars are transforming the region through these improvements. Metro's Communications Team has implemented a campaign called, "In the Works", touting the infrastructure improvements spanning the county. Research shows that the campaign has resonated with the public, so the Communications Team will refresh this campaign and build on this already-effective theme.

There's Still More To Do

Despite the progress that has been made, more is necessary to position the county for future growth and transportation needs. The Communications Team will overlay the "In the Works" campaign with a new campaign to educate the public about the elements of the LRTP with the mission of moving Metro forward.

Much has been done

Strategies

- Educate the public about Metro's enhanced security program
- Show the progress of Metro's mobility improvements
- Share the benefits of past and current mobility improvements

There's still more to do

Strategies

- Frame the need to plan for the future growth of Los Angeles County
- Educate the public about how the proposed transportation plan will provide mobility options and quality of life
- Provide opportunities for the region to engage in future plans to transform transportation

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TACTICS

The Communications Team will utilize many tactics throughout the Education Program. A more detailed work plan will break down the activities with timeframes for deploying these tactics. Below is a summary of the tactical approach:

Outdoor Advertising – Billboards, bus shelters, bus ads, rail ads

Broadcast Media – Radio, TV, and podcasts that can be geographically targeted to audiences

Print Ads – Newspaper ads and inserts to tell Metro's story through print media

Earned Media – Proactive pitching to media outlets, including print, television, radio and online media

Key Stakeholder Outreach – Briefings and open dialogue with community leaders

Public Meetings – Meetings around the county to inform and engage the public

Telephone Town Halls – Live, large telephone town hall meetings for Board members and Metro leadership to educate and interact with the public

Web – Informational and interactive online elements to engage stakeholders in transportation priorities

Social Media – Engage the online audience to expand the influence of information

News Blogs – Metro's blogs The Source and El Pasajero to chronicle the agency's work and happenings, seeding coverage with other blogs and media outlets

Digital Outreach – Online advertising targeted geographically or demographically

Opinion Editorials/Guest Columns – Placement of opinion pieces in print and online publications

Email Communications – Email blasts and an e-newsletter to inform the public about agency news, milestones, progress and opportunities for engagement

Influencer Marketing – Engaging and building relationships with key influencers to flow down to others looking for opinion leadership

Messaging Toolkits – Information, graphics, pre-written social media posts and articles, and talking points to assist partner organizations in messaging the transportation plan

Community Events – Presence at community events to reach geographically segmented audiences

Speakers' Bureau – Presentations to community groups, schools, senior centers, business groups, employers, service organizations, neighborhood groups and others

Special and Promotional Events – Milestone and promotional events to increase awareness of Metro programs and services and celebrate major accomplishments and progress

Collateral Materials – Creative content including brochures, fact sheets, flyers, etc.

Educational Videos – Short informational and awareness videos about Metro's programs and projects

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Cable access programming – Quarterly news show, Metro Motion, produced and distributed to 80 cable television stations in Los Angeles County

School and Senior Outreach – Outreach to K-12 schools and seniors to educate about how to ride and be safe around the Metro system

Late Night Service Promotion – Let Metro drive when visiting sports and entertainment venues and major events to position Metro as an attractive choice for discretionary riders traveling to nighttime activities

Online Video Series – Rider videos educating on how to use the Metro system and "commute makeovers" featuring advice on how to be multi-modal, promoted through Metro's web and social media channels

Crowdsourcing – Community engagement through crowdsourcing – online efforts to tap into the collective intelligence of the public at large, enabling Metro to gain deeper insight into their wants and needs

Service and Data Sharing Partnerships – Forge new data sharing partnerships with known technology and consumer services such as Google, Microsoft Bing!, WAZE and more

Tap into New Tech – Promote Metro's technology assets such as the Go Metro app, taptogo.net website, etc. to enhance the customer experience

Metro Tours – Tours of Metro construction projects for senior groups, students and other community members

Active Transportation Ads – Awareness about bicycling and first/last mile connections

SCHEDULE

The Communications Plan will begin in November and run through June 2016 as the Expenditure Plan is finalized. The more detailed communications work plan will establish a schedule for the Education Program activities.

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