



## Board Report

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**Agenda Number:** 19.

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### EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE NOVEMBER 16, 2023

**SUBJECT: 2024 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM**

**ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

CONSIDER:

- A. RECEIVING the State and Federal Legislative Report;
- B. ADOPTING the proposed 2024 Federal Legislative Program as outlined in Attachment A; and
- C. ADOPTING the proposed 2024 State Legislative Program as outlined in Attachment B.

#### **ISSUE**

On an annual basis, the Board of Directors adopts a legislative program for the upcoming state legislative and federal congressional sessions, which provides guidance to staff on legislative issues and policy as a means of advancing and protecting Metro's authority and the transportation interests of Los Angeles County. Pursuant to the goals outlined in the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Equity Platform, and other board directives, we will continue to evaluate and consider long-term strategic advocacy and legislative goals for the agency as outlined in the plan. We will continue to work with the implementing departments within Metro to develop the broader objectives and will bring to the Board authorization to pursue additional specific measures as they become sufficiently developed and ready for pursuit through legislative processes.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The role of the legislative program is to clearly define Metro's goals and objectives by securing necessary legislative authority, program funding, and regulatory actions needed at the state and federal levels. The program provides policy direction to our advocacy activities in Sacramento and Washington, DC. To achieve these important goals, Government Relations staff will implement a long-term legislative strategy of consensus building and coordination with transportation stakeholders throughout Los Angeles County, the State of California, and Federal officials. The Legislative Program directs staff to monitor and engage in several legislative and advocacy efforts. The [Government Relations Legislative Matrix](#)

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[https://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB\\_Attachments/231108%20-%2011%20-%20November%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf](https://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/231108%20-%2011%20-%20November%202023%20-%20LA%20Metro%20Legislative%20Matrix.pdf), updated and presented to the Board monthly, highlights several bills of interest to the agency.

## **DISCUSSION**

A recap of legislative activities for the 2023 calendar year on the state and federal levels can be found below. The Federal and State Legislative goals, as outlined in attachments A and B, will inform the activities pursued by the Government Relations department for the upcoming calendar year. There are no substantial changes to the state and federal goals in 2024, as the previous year's goals remain relevant to our advocacy strategy. One state goal was updated to reflect Metro's explicit support for enhanced infrastructure financing districts. Based on Board direction, Metro plans to sponsor state legislation related to aligning Metro with other agencies for proper benchmarking and permitting more efficient business practices. In addition to constant collaboration with the Board and other internal Metro departments, Government Relations will continue to ensure that our legislative priorities and efforts are also coordinated with our regional transportation partners, including Metrolink, Southern California Associations of Governments (SCAG), Municipal Operators, and Southern California County transportation commissions.

### **Federal Recap**

In 2023, consistent with our past practice, our agency continued to smartly and aggressively pursue our Board-approved federal legislative priorities in Washington, DC.

On November 15, 2021, President Biden signed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (P.L. 117-58). This historic legislation - overwhelmingly supported by the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation - provided a record level of investments in roads, bridges, rail, transit, airports, ports, and waterways while helping the nation rebuild its electric grid, upgrade broadband infrastructure, improve access to safe drinking water, deploy electric vehicles and buses, improve disaster resilience, and much more.

As we noted last year, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law significantly increased funding provided through key discretionary and formula grant programs such as Capital Investment Grants, Buses and Bus Facility Grants, Low or No Emission Bus Grants, State of Good Repair Grants, and Urbanized Area Formula Grants. Significantly, the bill also reformed federal Local Hire rules - permitting our agency to hire locally on projects funded in part or in whole by the Federal Government.

Our agency is grateful to the Biden-Harris Administration and the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation for strongly backing the passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

In addition to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the agency was actively engaged with the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation as they considered the Inflation Reduction Act (P.L. 117-169) - which President Biden signed into law on August 16, 2022. This bill includes several key funding

sources - including \$27 billion for the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, and \$3 billion for the Neighborhood Access and Equity Grants, among other key provisions.

As in previous years, the annual appropriations process in Washington, DC, continues to be the subject of disagreement, and again Congress missed its annual September 30 deadline to pass spending bills for Fiscal Year 2024 to fund the various federal agencies and programs - including the U.S. Department of Transportation. As of the writing of this report, the Federal Government is operating on a Continuing Resolution through November 17, 2023. Metro continues to work closely with our Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation to advocate for the priorities included in the House and Senate Appropriations bills that would benefit our agency.

Lastly, Metro has worked hard in Washington, DC, to successfully advance our major transit capital projects through the Capital Investment Grant program. Staff has been engaged in advocacy with Congressional offices and the Biden-Harris Administration for each of these projects throughout 2023 - with an understanding that our number one priority project seeking a Full Funding Grant Agreement is the West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor Project. We are working to ensure this project secures either planning or design funding in the New Starts Report (Federal Fiscal Year 2025) that will be issued by the Federal Transit Administration early next year.

Through our efforts in Washington, DC, Metro continues to incorporate equity as a central component of our work. Metro staff has been engaged in an active dialogue with the Biden-Harris administration as they continue to roll out their Justice40 Initiative, with the goal of delivering 40 percent of the benefits from federal investments to disadvantaged communities across the United States.

Metro will continue to work closely with the Administration, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and Congress to leverage our local funding to advance transit, highway, and other effective mobility projects across Los Angeles County. The complete 2024 Federal Legislative Plan is outlined in Attachment A.

## **State Recap**

During the 2023 State Legislative Session, the California Legislature and Governor Newsom were primarily focused on homelessness, education, housing, as well as climate and infrastructure issues. The legislature passed a number of proposals that focused on that state's climate change goals, transportation projects, workforce recovery, and funding to support efforts to end homelessness. The following summarizes the 2023 legislative session and Metro's advocacy efforts surrounding the budget and legislation relevant to Metro's projects and programs.

## **State Budget**

Metro staff continued to engage in the budget process through working with members of the LA County Delegation in order to ensure that LA County would receive its proportionate share of transportation resources. In January, Governor Gavin Newsom released his budget proposal for the upcoming fiscal year, as the state faced a Department of Finance-estimated deficit of nearly \$30

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billion in the coming fiscal year. The Governor stressed that his proposed budget would reduce this deficit to \$22.5 billion. Additionally, the State had nearly \$36 billion in reserve, or “rainy day” funds, which also could help mitigate potential deficits. The Governor’s budget focused on seven key areas of investment: education, homelessness, infrastructure, wildfires, emergency response, combatting climate change, and drought.

In 2022, in addition to the transit funding currently being allocated through Cycle 6 of the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP), the Budget Act included a commitment for an additional \$2 billion for TIRCP in FY 23-24 and FY 24-25. In his initial budget proposal this year, Governor Newsom proposed to reduce the amount of TIRCP funding to \$1 billion in each fiscal year. Other transportation-related updates included proposed reductions to the Active Transportation Program by \$500 million. The budget proposed delaying \$350 million in grade separation projects originally planned for this fiscal year and instead proposes making those funds available in FY 25-26. On Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEV), the budget maintains \$8.9 billion in investments, including approximately \$5.3 billion for programs supporting drayage, transit and school buses, port ZEVs, and infrastructure.

On April 26, then-Metro Board Chair Najarian was joined by 1st Vice-Chair Dupont-Walker, Directors Solis, Sandoval, and Dutra, along with CEO Wiggins, on a budget advocacy trip to Sacramento. This trip was centered around meetings with key legislators in leadership and the budget process in order to advance the Board’s request that the legislature reject the Governor’s proposed \$2 billion in cuts to the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program. This visit was crucial to Metro’s plan to advance the Gold Line Foothill Extension and West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor, which would benefit from the increased TIRCP funding.

On that same day, Senate Democrats released their 2023-24 budget plan, dubbed “Protect Our Progress,” which outlined a number of key investments and built upon the Governor’s January budget proposal. The Protect Our Progress plan rejected the Governor’s proposed cuts to the Transportation Infrastructure Package, including the \$2 billion in cuts to TIRCP.

On May 12, Governor Gavin Newsom released the May Revision to his 2023-2024 state budget proposal. The May Revision included changes to the Governor’s budget, originally released in January, based on then-current revenues. The state now anticipated a \$31.5 billion budget deficit for the year, up from \$22.5 billion in January, amid uncertain economic conditions and a delay in tax returns due to natural disaster extensions. In his budget proposal in January, Governor Newsom proposed reducing TIRCP funding to \$1 billion in each fiscal year. The May Revision did not change this proposal. Other transportation-related funding proposals are also largely unchanged from the Governor’s budget.

Shortly after the May Revision was released, Assemblymember Luz Rivas (D- Sylmar), in her role as the Chair of the Los Angeles County State Legislative Delegation, issued a letter to Budget Chairs Senator Nancy Skinner (D- Berkeley) and Assemblymember Phil Ting (D-San Francisco), outlining the Delegation’s priorities as we entered the next phase of budget negotiations.

The Delegation’s budget priorities letter emphasized protecting budget commitments that were made in the 2021-2022 fiscal year, rather than asking for new funding for any priorities. Crucially, this included maintaining the full \$4 billion for TIRCP over two years, identified in SB 198 from last year. The letter read: “The Governor’s proposed \$2 billion cut to the TIRCP would impact the ability to deliver crucial capital projects in the County. Those cuts would significantly impact funding for the

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Foothill Gold Line and the West Santa Ana Branch project, and future funding opportunities for the Sepulveda Pass.”

On May 23, the Senate Subcommittee #5 voted to advance a budget proposal that includes \$2 billion for the TIRCP this year. On May 25, the Assembly Budget Committee, chaired by Assemblymember Phil Ting, voted to approve their fiscal year 2023-24 budget plan. Included in the plan are several key priorities for transportation, also including a rejection of the Governor’s proposed cut to the TIRCP funding levels for this year, allocating the full \$2 billion to the program, and providing flexibility for the funds for transit agencies to address operational funding gaps, while holding transit agencies accountable to be fiscally responsible.

On June 15, the California Senate and Assembly’s 2023-24 budget agreement passed on a vote of 61 to 14 in the Assembly and 32 to 8 in the Senate. The budget, SB 101, agreement followed months of negotiations and hearings between the two houses, amid uncertain economic conditions that include a projected deficit of \$31.5 billion. The budget rejected the cuts to the TIRCP proposed by the Governor in his January Budget proposal. Under SB 101 the TIRCP program will receive \$2 billion this fiscal year, with the population-based distribution formula in place. The budget also included over \$1 billion over 3 years in funds, partially from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, for a Zero Emission Transit Capital Program.

On Saturday, June 24, the transportation budget trailer bills, AB and SB 125, were put into print. Ultimately, the legislature passed and the Governor signed SB 125. Following the passage of SB 125, Metro engaged with leadership in both the Senate and Assembly, along with the Governor’s office, to express concerns with provisions related to required reporting by regional transportation planning agencies.

### Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program Guidelines

As part of our budget advocacy surrounding SB 125 in August and September, Metro has also been engaged in the guidelines process through CalSTA. On August 30, Metro submitted comments on the interim draft guidelines to suggest edits that create greater clarity on the SB 125 TIRCP grant process. On September 14, Metro submitted further comments on the draft guidelines released following input on the interim draft guidelines. Staff also worked through the California Transit Association to provide an LA County perspective to statewide partners. The final SB 125 TIRCP guidelines were released on Friday, September 29. Staff are appreciative of the internal and external collaboration that led to this inclusive process and look forward to the next steps in our partnership with the state to provide funding for the Board-approved priorities of the Foothill Gold Line Extension Project and the West Santa Ana Branch Project.

### Legislative Update

In the 2023 legislative session, our advocacy efforts also focused heavily on Board-directed State

Legislative Program goals, as well as several proposals that would have impacted Metro programs. Metro's 2023 State Legislative priorities focused on sponsoring a bill to allow Metro to utilize job order contracting, as well as continuing to advocate for increased transportation funding for Los Angeles County. Early on in the legislative process this year, Metro also signed on to sponsor a bill related to combatting homelessness on transit properties.

Metro was successful in advocating for the passage and signing of two sponsored measures. The advocacy efforts around each bill included stakeholder support and collaboration that helped to advance each measure. Staff would like to acknowledge the Board for its forward thinking and support of the measures. Staff would also like to note that the diligent staff support from around the agency was integral to the success of the measures and coalition building efforts. The bills, which will become law on January 1, 2024, are summarized below:

- AB 499 by Assemblymember Luz Rivas (D - Sylmar). AB 499 will allow Metro to utilize job order contracting as a project delivery method. JOC allows for a more efficient procurement process and will enable Metro to rapidly and efficiently address smaller construction projects at our properties.
- AB 1377 by Assemblymember Laura Friedman (D - Burbank). This bill will require applications or planning materials for state funding through the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) program to include data and a narrative summary of quantifiable steps that the applicant has taken to improve the delivery of housing and services to people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness on transit facilities.

Metro also formally supported the following bills that were passed and signed:

- SB 434 by Senator Dave Min (D - Irvine). SB 434 will require the ten largest transit operators in California to collect and publish qualitative and quantitative data related to the harassment of diverse groups of riders using the survey developed by the Mineta Transportation Institute pursuant to last year's SB 1161, which was sponsored by Metro.
- SB 617 by Senator Josh Newman (D - Fullerton). SB 617 will authorize California's public transit agencies (amongst others) to utilize the progressive design-build procurement method for capital projects. Metro already has this authority, but this legislation will expand that authority to all transit agencies.

Additionally, Metro supported the following bill that is still in the legislature:

- AB 610 by Assemblymember Chris Holden (D - Pasadena). This bill would have created the statewide Youth Transit Pass Pilot Program, including a flexible grant system that would distribute funds to transit agencies to implement youth transit pass programs. The bill would authorize grant funds to be used to maintain an existing fare free program and/or partner with educational institutions. Staff will continue to advocate for bills and programs in the 2024 legislative cycle that would support the implementation of a fareless system.

## LA County Delegation Engagement

Metro's State Advocacy strategy continues to include a robust outreach and communications plan to inform and engage the members of the Los Angeles County State Assembly and Senate delegation, in support of the Board-adopted Legislative program, Equity Platform, Customer Experience Plan, Zero-Emission Bus Plan and LRTP goals. State advocacy efforts will also continue to support Metro's Planning Department policies and programs to secure discretionary and formula funding under Senate Bill 1 for Los Angeles County as administered by the CTC. Staff will also engage in discussions and advocate for state policies and funding opportunities as the Board approves directives to implement new initiatives that would address Metro's goals to implement the Equity Platform, reimagined public safety system, and affordable housing.

This legislative engagement also includes quarterly legislative roundtables briefings with staff, subregional project briefings, and tours with individual legislators. The legislature will reconvene for the second year of the legislative session on January 3, 2024. Government Relations staff will continue to brief staff and elected officials on Metro priorities and projects during the legislative recess.

In addition to the activities described in the updates above, staff will be working to address a variety of other specific policy issues in the Legislative process, budget process as well as in various administrative processes in Sacramento (the entire 2024 State Legislative Program is outlined in Attachment B). These include but are not limited to:

- Sponsoring ethics-related legislation to align Metro with other agencies for proper benchmarking and permit more efficient business practices.
- Explore legislation that would clarify provisions of state law that impact Metro's real property transactions and ground leasing for TOC developments, affordable housing and other uses.
- Working with the California Public Utilities Commission and the California Air Resources Board to advance Metro's Zero Emission Bus Program;
- Working with the Governor's Administration and key leadership in ensuring that the Governor's Executive Orders on Sustainability align with Metro's plans; and
- Supporting the allocation of cap and trade funds to Los Angeles County.

With Board approval, the 2024 State and Federal Legislative advocacy platform goals will guide Metro staff as we work with leadership in Sacramento and Washington, DC to advance the priorities outlined by the Board and CEO to secure policy reforms and funding for the agency.

## **EQUITY PLATFORM**

Adopting the 2024 State and Federal Legislative Program goals could positively impact moving policy forward that supports Metro's investments in Equity Focus Communities. Outlining Metro's policy priorities to leadership in Sacramento and Washington, DC, is an important tool in creating equitable transportation and economic outcomes for riders of the diverse communities of Los Angeles County. The Board's adoption of the 2024 State and Federal Legislative Program Goals authorizes Metro's staff to engage directly with the state and federal legislature members who are responsible for setting

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policy and funding targets for the LA County region. Legislation sponsored and supported by Metro as outlined in the Goals creates greater investment opportunities, supports a better customer experience, and accelerates project delivery in all Equity Focus Communities in LA County.

Ensuring Metro's advocacy efforts are effective and equitable requires regular assessment of equity impacts for specific measures and proposals. Staff will continue to work with partners in the office of Civil Rights, Racial Equity and Inclusion regularly to assess equity impacts and strategically communicate Metro's commitment to equitable transportation in our advocacy efforts.

### **DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT**

Approval of this item supports funding for safety initiatives and rules and regulations that do not compromise safety.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

A number of the proposed state and federal legislative initiatives may provide additional funding for countywide transportation programs and projects.

### **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

The Board of Directors could determine that a legislative program is unnecessary for the agency. Failure to adopt a legislative program could result in Metro being ill prepared to address the policy and legislative challenges that will arise during the coming year.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

The adoption of the 2024 State and Federal Legislation Program supports Goal #4 in the Vision 2028 Strategic Plan goals, specifically Goal #4.2: Metro will help drive mobility agendas, discussions, and policies at the state, regional, and national levels.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Government Relations staff will continue to regularly sponsor briefings in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles County for our Congressional Delegation and other key staffers on both the House and Senate Appropriations and Authorization committees and with officials in the Biden-Harris Administration. We have and will continue to emphasize briefings for professional staff members working for House and Senate committees with primary responsibility for authorizing and appropriations bills. Metro looks forward to being an active stakeholder as the Administration moves to implement the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

In Sacramento, staff will continue to develop and strategically advance our agency's Board approved State Legislative Program through maintaining support and close relationships with the Los Angeles County State Legislative Delegation, key leaders in the Senate and Assembly Transportation Committees, as well as key stakeholders, including, the Governor, Caltrans Director, California



Transportation Commission, and the California State Transportation Agency.

Government Relations staff will initiate briefings for the Gubernatorial Administration, members of the Legislature as well as committee staff. We will also work with state legislators to author any legislative initiatives proposed by this program. At the federal level, Government Relations will keep in close contact with new and existing members of our Congressional delegation and key Authorizing and Appropriations staff to keep our projects at the forefront. Staff will continue to engage in strategic advocacy and legislative efforts related to several transportation issues and inform the Board of those efforts. Pursuant to the Board adopted Board Advocacy Plan, we will also work closely with the Board to utilize Board members' relationships and experience in legislative matters.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - 2024 Federal Legislative Program

Attachment B - 2024 State Legislative Program

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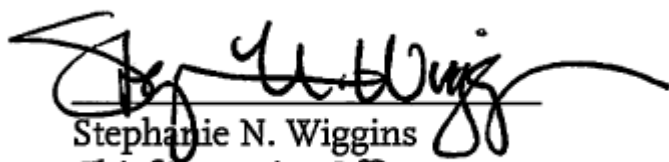
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**2024 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM GOALS**

**GOAL #1: CONTINUE TO BUILD FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR METRO'S AMBITIOUS CAPITAL PROGRAM**

Ongoing Activities:

Consistent with the Board-adopted Federal Legislative Program – Metro Government Relations has aggressively and successfully worked to back Congressional efforts to increase Federal Funding for the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) Program – the primary Federal program to fund new transit capital projects. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law signed into law by President Biden in November of 2021 effectively doubled funding for the CIG Program. Over the last decade, our agency has been a national leader in securing federal funding through the CIG Program.

Proposed Activities:

In 2024, Metro will continue to strongly advocate for our agency's New Starts transit capital projects (consistent with the project priority list adopted by the Board on April of 2021 – Board Report #2021-0150 and Motion 2021-0237) to receive funding through the CIG Program – working in concert with all relevant stakeholders across Los Angeles County.

**GOAL #2: CONTINUE TO ACTIVELY SUPPORT THE BIDEN-HARRIS ADMINISTRATION'S JUSTICE40 INITIATIVE – CREATING FEDERAL POLICIES THAT PROMOTE EQUITY AND BRING FEDERAL RESOURCES TO LOS ANGELES COUNTY IN SUPPORT OF EQUITABLE OUTCOME**

Proposed Activity:

Continue our agency's leadership in working with the Biden-Harris Administration and the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation to build awareness among federal policymakers about existing inequalities in our region and the potential for Metro projects and programs to provide access to opportunity. Using this equity lens, we will seek to encourage federal investments to benefit disadvantaged communities across Los Angeles County. This work will include, but not be limited to, efforts to embed Justice40 in the updated guidelines being drafted by the U.S. Department of Transportation for the CIG Program. Maintain our work with the Biden-Harris administration as they continue to roll out their Justice40 Initiative, with the goal of delivering 40 percent of the benefits from federal investments to disadvantaged communities across the United States.

### **GOAL #3: SECURE DISCRETIONARY GRANT FUNDING FROM MAJOR USDOT GRANT PROGRAMS**

#### Proposed Activities:

Because federal grant and formula programs have grown significantly under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act, our agency will work closely with Los Angeles County's Congressional Delegation – and other key stakeholders - to demonstrate strong support for grant applications that Metro submits to the U.S. Department of Transportation. These grant applications would be for, but not limited to, the INFRA Grant Program, RAISE Grant Program, Bus, and Bus Facilities, the Low/No Grant Program and the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund – among other federal grant opportunities.

### **GOAL #4: WORK CLOSELY WITH THE BIDEN-HARRIS ADMINISTRATION AND USDOT ON REGULATIONS AND PROPOSED RULEMAKING THAT IMPACTS METRO**

#### Proposed Activities:

As the Biden-Harris Administration continues to implement the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act, staff will continue to work to ensure Metro's interests are well represented. This includes close coordination and submission of public comments, direct communication with agencies and agency officials, and encouraging Congressional involvement to help us accomplish our goals.

### **GOAL #5: WORK WITH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO SUCCESSFULLY COORDINATE ON THE 2028 U.S. OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES BEING HELD IN LOS ANGELES – INCLUDING SUPPORT FOR OUR FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET REQUEST**

#### Proposed Activities:

Historically, the U.S. Department of Transportation has played a vital role in assisting and coordinating with regional transportation agencies to ensure enhanced mobility during Olympic and Paralympic Games held in the United States. In coordination with LA28 and other key stakeholders, Metro is working with officials at the White House and the U.S. Department of Transportation to ensure the free flow of information on the opportunity for the federal government to fund the many mobility enhancing projects being built and being planned across Los Angeles County by our agency. Specifically, Metro is seeking to have funds for a range of mobility projects related to the Games included in the President's Fiscal Year 2025 Budget.

**GOAL #6: SEEK TO SAFEGUARD THE REFORMS TO FEDERAL LOCAL HIRE RULES THAT WERE EMBEDDED IN THE BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE LAW**

Proposed Activities:

Work with the Biden-Harris Administration, Congress, and other relevant stakeholders to safeguard the reforms included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law which permit Local Hiring. This would be done by highlighting the positive impact hiring locally is having on Metro's capital program.

**GOAL #7: WORK TO ADVANCE FEDERAL POLICY AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES IN SUPPORT OF METRO'S FARELESS SYSTEM INITIATIVE**

Proposed Activities:

Continue to be a national leader in advocating for pending legislation that would establish grants in support of fare-free and reduced-fare transit programs. Previously, Metro successfully advocated for the inclusion of such funding as part of a new discretionary grant program (Affordable Housing Access Program) included in the Build Back Better Act. Staff will work with all relevant stakeholders across Los Angeles County to aggressively pursue federal funding for fare-free and reduced-fare transit services across Los Angeles County in any appropriate legislative vehicles during the upcoming 118<sup>th</sup> Congress.

**GOAL #9: ADVOCATE FOR POLICIES AND FUNDING TO ASSIST IN HELPING THE COUNTY REDUCE HOMELESSNESS**

Proposed Activity:

Consistent with Board directives, Metro will support legislation, initiatives, and programs for additional funding, services, and resources to address the homelessness crisis, including any opportunities for direct assistance to Metro and our partner agencies.

**GOAL #10: WORK TO REFORM FEDERAL LAW TO PERMIT LOCAL PREFERENCE WITH RESPECT TO PROCUREMENTS**

Proposed Activities:

Federal law (49 CFR § 661.21) currently prohibits the use of local procurement preferences on FTA-funded projects. In addition to this specific prohibition, the principle of federal preemption applies, whereby any provision of state/local law that contradicts a governing federal provision will be preempted by the federal provision when applicable. It is our understanding that any buy local procurement preference would violate broadly applicable Buy America requirements - which set forth a national preference instead of a local preference. The relevant USC provisions are 49 USC 5323(j) and 23 USC 313.

Given the Board's adoption of a motion regarding Local Preference on October 21, 2021, Metro Government Relations will continue to endeavor to change federal law to specifically allow buy local procurement provisions to be used alongside generally applicable Buy America provisions.

## **GOAL #11: CONTINUE TO WORK TO BRING A PERMANENT CENTER OF TRANSPORTATION EXCELLENCE INDUSTRIAL PARK TO LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

### Proposed Activities:

Continue efforts to encourage federal support for Metro's Board-approved goal of creating a Center of Transportation Excellence within Los Angeles County – which would result in having a rolling stock production facility in Los Angeles County. Our agency will, consistent with the relevant Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors resolutions, closely collaborate with Los Angeles County's CEO and their professional staff, in addition to other municipal leaders, in identifying viable locations, both short and long-term, for an industrial complex to potentially include rail and bus manufacturing plant in Los Angeles County. This complex may also include, but not be limited to, suppliers of rail and bus parts, a rail test track, and a climate-controlled facility for testing purposes. As part of this work, Metro will work with the appropriate federal agencies, including but not limited to the U.S. Department of Commerce, to secure support for our Center for Transportation Excellence from funding made available through either the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and/or the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022.

## **GOAL #13: ADDITIONAL PRIORITIES**

### Proposed Activities:

1. Work to mitigate impacts of the US Department of Labor determination regarding PEPRA in coordination with all relevant state and federal partners;
2. Per Board direction, seek to secure federal funding for a I-710 South Clean Truck Program;
3. Work to ensure that any legislation adopted by Congress and signed into law by the President concerning autonomous vehicles does not compromise safety by weakening state and local traffic laws;
4. Work with Metro's regional partners to advance career education and training programs that will ensure the needed workforce to operate and maintain our transit system is ready and available;
5. Work with the Biden Administration to avoid negative impacts as a result of the implementation of tariffs on steel and various rolling stock parts and materials;
6. Work to support funding for active transportation such as bikeshare and other first/last mile mobility solutions;

7. Work with USDOT – consistent with Board policy – to address congestion pricing opportunities with respect to potential funding and regulations;
8. Work with Congress to allow art and non-functional landscaping expenses related to transit projects to be eligible for federal funding;
9. Support legislation that would create new financial incentives to facilitate the development of affordable housing around transit;
10. Seek to ensure tax benefits and credits that are important to Metro remain in the U.S. tax code.
11. Monitor and support legislation that would authorize the cities and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County to develop and implement strategies to reach Vision Zero goals of improving safety and eliminating traffic-related fatalities.
12. Identify, monitor, and support legislation that will advance the implementation of Metro's Street Safety, Data Sharing, and Collaboration Policy goals.



**2024 STATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM GOALS**

**GOAL #1: ENSURE THE STATE CONTINUES TO SECURE, PROTECT, AND FULLY FUND THE MAJOR TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS**

Proposed Activities:

Protect Metro's key fund sources to deliver and advance equitable transportation options;

Secure proportionate share of state fund allocations under the various transportation funding programs created and expanded under the provisions of Senate Bill 1 for Los Angeles County;

Support and preserve key funding sources under Senate Bill 1;

Communicate the importance of stable transportation funding to improve mobility in Los Angeles County, foster economic development and create jobs;

Protect Public Transportation Account revenues;

Secure proportionate share of federal funds allocated via state mechanisms, such as CMAQ and alternative transportation programs; and

Oppose any legislation and/or statewide initiatives that would jeopardize funding or repeal key components of Senate Bill 1.

**GOAL #2: SUPPORT LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES AIMED AT INCREASING FUNDING FOR LOS ANGELES COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES**

Proposed Activities:

Support transportation funding proposals and ensure that they are structured to support Metro's priority projects, initiatives and programs;

Work with statewide partners on any efforts to develop new transportation-related fees or taxes to fund mobility improvements in Los Angeles County;

Support legislation that authorizes, clarifies, or expands the implementation of innovative funding mechanisms for regional transportation planning agencies and the County of Los Angeles; and



Support legislation that protects Metro's authority to collect dedicated local sales tax revenues.

**GOAL #3: WORK TO ENSURE IMPLEMENTATION OF METRO'S BOARD- ADOPTED LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP)**

Proposed Activities:

Pursue strategies and funding opportunities to implement the various modal programs in the Board-adopted LRTP;

Work to secure additional funds through the various state funding programs including but not limited to, Local Partnership Program, Active Transportation Program, Solutions for Congested Corridors Program, State Highway Maintenance and Rehabilitation Program, Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program, Low Carbon Transit Operations Program, State Transportation Improvement Program, State Highway Operations and Preservation Program, freight corridor programs and bond funds;

Support legislation that would better position Metro to receive funding through various state programs; and

Support legislation that facilitates and/or clarifies the use of public private partnerships and other innovative project delivery mechanisms for transit projects.

**GOAL #4: SUPPORT LEGISLATION, REGULATORY ACTION, AND FUNDING INITIATIVES THAT SUPPORT TRANSIT RIDERS AND ENHANCE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**

Proposed Activities:

Support legislation and appropriate levels of funding from the state budget to support implementation of a fareless transit system;

Support legislation, initiatives, and programs for additional funding, services and resources to address the homelessness crisis, including any opportunities for direct assistance to Metro and our partner agencies;

Monitor legislation and funding opportunities that impact and incentivize the development of affordable and transit-adjacent housing;

Support any efforts to increase funding and expand eligibility to transit agencies to aid in the fight to end homelessness;

Support legislation that incorporates elements of Metro's transit-oriented communities

strategies in regional housing planning and development;

Increase flexibility for Metro to deliver transit-supportive, community supported, and neighborhood appropriate uses;

Support legislation, regulation, and state budget action that support Metro's goals of eliminating disparities, meaningfully engaging communities, advancing equitable outcomes, and increasing access and mobility options for marginalized and vulnerable people; and

Support legislation and explore potential funding mechanisms that would impact Metro's ability to implement the goals and objectives in studies currently underway at Metro, such as improving the customer experience and the traffic reduction study.

#### **GOAL #5: SUPPORT EFFORTS TO IMPROVE SAFETY AND IMPROVE SERVICE ON THE REGION'S COMMUTER RAIL SYSTEM**

Proposed Activities:

Advocate for additional state funding to increase the safety of the commuter rail system in Los Angeles County and the entire Metrolink service area;

Support legislation and actions that would benefit Metrolink's SCORE program of capital projects;

Support additional funding for enhanced commuter rail safety, especially for automatic train stop/positive train control systems, grade separations and double tracking single track portions of Metrolink's service area; and

Support legislation and funding programs that promote the accelerated certification of new rail vehicle technologies, prioritizing zero emission propulsion, and pilot programs which test their viability, and pursue funding opportunities to deploy such technology whenever and wherever they become available.

#### **GOAL #6: MAXIMIZE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUNDING LOS ANGELES COUNTY'S TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S CAP AND TRADE PROGRAMS**

Proposed Activities:

Ensure Cap & Trade funds are allocated to transportation, that Los Angeles County receives a proportionate share; and

Support Legislation that would allocate additional Cap & Trade funds to support key Metro priorities, such as Metro's transit capital and operations program, fare-free transit, zero-emission bus conversion, and zero-emission vehicle charging infrastructure expansion, including funding to support zero-emission trucks in heavily-traveled freight corridors.

**GOAL #7: COORDINATE WITH OUR LOCAL AND STATE PARTNERS TO INCORPORATE THE REGION'S NEEDS IN EMERGING CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMS**

Proposed Activities:

Monitor continued implementation of AB 32, SB 743, and SB 375 (including sustainable community strategies and related initiatives/documents);

Work in partnership with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), California Air Resources Board (CARB), California Transit Association (CTA), California Energy Commission (CEC), Strategic Growth Council (SGC), Southern California Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) to support Metro's projects and programs;

Advocate the connection between transit operations funding, SB 375 and other state global warming policies, programs and initiatives;

Support initiatives that promote greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategies such as vehicle miles travelled reduction, active transportation, and operational efficiency best practices;

Encourage development and utilization of regulations and technologies that would enhance the ability to expand, deploy and operate Metro Bike Share;

Support continued efforts to encourage smart growth and other connectivity and livability principles and their interaction with transit and highway investments while preserving authority of local agencies;

Support legislative efforts to fund programs affecting environmentally sensitive stakeholders and clean air programs in our region, particularly with regards to regional transit planning, construction, and procurement efforts;

Support legislation that would allocate funding for climate resiliency planning and implementation for transit;

Support new initiatives that encourage the use of advanced, environmentally friendly and cost-effective strategies in the construction and retrofit of transit facilities including infrastructure related to renewable energy, low impact development, sustainable construction practices, and similar technologies;

Advocate for funding for Metro's first/last mile, bike and pedestrian projects under the State's Active Transportation and Local Planning Grants programs;

Monitor and support legislation that would authorize the cities and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County to develop and implement strategies to reach Vision Zero goals of improving safety and eliminating traffic-related fatalities;

Identify, monitor, and support legislation that will advance the implementation of Metro's Street Safety, Data Sharing, and Collaboration Policy goals; and

Support new and existing initiatives that complement the development and subsequent implementation of Metro's Zero-Emission Bus Strategic Plan and other Board directives.

**GOAL #8: ACTIVELY WORK WITH STATE, REGIONAL AND LOCAL TRANSPORTATION INTERESTS AND ENHANCE TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING AND PROGRAMS STATEWIDE**

Proposed Activities:

Support efforts to secure funding and/or obtain authority to generate additional funding for bus transit capital, operations, security needs, corridor projects, soundwalls, bike projects, Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE) and other important transportation projects and programs;

Work with other agencies and the State to seek remedies to increase funding for Metro's Freeway Services Patrol (FSP) operations;

Oppose any efforts to modify Senate Bill 1 (Beall, 2017) programs that would reduce funding for Los Angeles County;

Work cooperatively with other transit agencies throughout the State, including the CTA, to secure and increase funding for transportation services, projects and programs; and

Identify and pursue opportunities for funding and to enhance authority where necessary to improve security and safety for customers, employees and property.

**GOAL #9: SUPPORT LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ACTIONS THAT ENHANCE AND PROTECT METRO'S ABILITY TO DELIVER INNOVATIVE TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS AND SERVICES IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

Proposed Activities:

Support efforts to clarify the oversight responsibilities of the PUC with respect to rail transit;

Oppose legislation that would seek to restructure the Metro Board of Directors;

Oppose legislation that would preempt collective bargaining, impose benefits in collective bargaining agreements or restrict the rights of local agencies in the collective bargaining process;

Preserve our authority in regional transportation funding decisions including those granted through SB 45;

Support legislation that would support or enhance Metro's long-term plans for energy resiliency;

Continue to advocate for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) reforms for and specified exemptions for transportation projects with continued collaboration of statewide stakeholders and organizations; and

Support initiatives and legislation to enhance Metro's ability to ensure safety of development and construction activities within or adjacent to Metro's infrastructure and right-of-way, in coordination with local municipalities, developers, and utility companies.

Monitor regulations and legislation that would clarify the State's distribution of sales tax revenues to Los Angeles County and Metro;

Coordinate with regional partners and monitor the State's autonomous vehicle regulations and ensure that federal, state and local regulations are aligned;

Support efforts to enhance the use of electronic fare payment or smart card technology and allow for ease of access for qualification for low-income riders;

Support legislation that would authorize and promote the use of technology to enhance safety, security and operations for our bus and rail operations;

Explore and pursue opportunities to accelerate and reduce costs on Metro projects; and

Support legislation and funding opportunities that enhance Metro's ability to deliver the transformative transportation infrastructure and operational enhancement projects needed in Los Angeles County to support the mobility of the region in the 2028 Olympic & Paralympic Games.

**GOAL #10: OPPOSE ANY LEGISLATION THAT COULD NEGATIVELY IMPACT METRO'S ABILITY TO OPERATE THE EXPRESSLANES PROGRAM AND SUPOORT LEGISLATION THAT ALLOWS FOR FUTURE EXPRESSLANES EXPANSION AND OTHER PRICING STRATEGIES**

Proposed Activities:

Support legislation that

1. Encourages development and utilization of regulations and technologies that would enhance the ability to verify vehicle occupancy and toll collection/payment.
2. Enhances Metro's ability to enforce the ExpressLanes Board adopted toll policy.
3. Amends or clarifies California vehicle code sections to authorize Metro to establish and enforce occupancy requirements in the ExpressLanes;
4. Amends Streets and Highways codes that impact Metro's ability to perform toll related functions including interoperability with other California toll agencies.
5. Supports and enables Metro's ability to expand Metro's ExpressLanes network upon Board approval.
6. Provides clarification of AB 194 regarding roles and responsibilities of Metro and Caltrans.
7. Supports and authorizes flexibility in how net toll-revenues are re-invested in support of an expanded corridor network of ExpressLanes in Los Angeles County.
8. Explore and support legislation that would authorize Metro to expand the use of pricing in Los Angeles County in partnership with local municipalities.

Oppose legislation that would:

1. Negatively impact Metro's ability to manage ExpressLanes demand utilizing congestion pricing.
2. Negatively impact financial viability and local control of ExpressLanes revenues.
3. Limit Metro's ability to operate and expand the ExpressLanes network.
4. Redirect SHOPP funding for maintaining the corridor.

**GOAL #11: ADVOCATE FOR POLICIES AND FUNDING THAT INCREASE THE SUPPLY AND AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY AND OTHER TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE USES NEAR METRO CORRIDORS**

Proposed Activities:

Support legislation, initiatives, and programs that aim to:

1. Reduce the costs and time to deliver affordable housing;
2. Complement Metro's TOC Policy (including anti-displacement and anti-gentrification policies);

3. Reduce Surplus Land Act impacts to Metro's Joint Development Program;
4. Stabilize and enhance housing affordability in existing communities;
5. Provide resources to Metro, LA County jurisdictions and other partner agencies to develop more collaborative land use policies that support equitable transit-oriented communities.

Identify and pursue opportunities for additional funding and policy reform for Southern California transportation infrastructure and transit oriented housing projects;

Support legislation and funding opportunities that incentivize, support, and accelerate the development of affordable and transit-adjacent housing;

Work with legislators and the Governor's office to preserve and increase the ability of the Joint Development Program to deliver on its portfolio approach to achieving housing goals;

Identify and pursue opportunities to consolidate and streamline applying for transportation infrastructure and transit-oriented development and housing grants;

Explore and potentially sponsor legislation that would clarify provisions of state law that impact Metro's real property transactions and ground leasing for transit-oriented developments, and affordable housing and other agency uses;

Seek to program modifications that recognize Metro's land discount as a significant contribution to affordable projects; and

Support legislation that would enhance opportunities for Opportunity Zones, Value Capture, Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts, or related concepts and mechanisms to fund transportation infrastructure or promote Transit-Oriented Developments and Metro's Transit Oriented Communities strategy.

## **GOAL #12: SUPPORT EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT HIGH SPEED RAIL (HSR) IN LOSANGELES COUNTY**

Metro supports the California High Speed Rail Project.

Metro is encouraged by the efforts to incorporate a blended corridor concept in its planning and to continue to evaluate and identify the need to connect the project to Los Angeles County.

Metro has identified a series of investments in Los Angeles County that would support future high-speed rail and would provide current benefits to commuters across the region. These investments are on shared corridors and create independent utility.

We encourage the State to make specific commitments to funding the segment

connecting to Los Angeles County and to maintain this segment as a high priority in future plans.

Metro supports the allocation of funding to elements of the blended corridor concept in Los Angeles County to support the ultimate completion of the High Speed Rail project.

Proposed Activities:

Advocate for the full allocation of funding to the Link Union Station project Phase A and Phase B and other corridor enhancements in Los Angeles County which support the ultimate completion of the High Speed Rail project;

Ensure timely implementation of Proposition 1A including allocation of connectivity funds;

Support legislation that preserves “book-end” funding for early-action projects identified as vital to the delivery of the HSR project in Southern California;

Support efforts to ensure that NEPA assignment authority for highway and transit projects is preserved; and

Support streamlining project approvals under Caltrans’ NEPA assignment authority.

**GOAL #13: SUPPORT EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH THE I-710 CLEAN TRUCK PROGRAM AND SECURE APPROVAL OF KEY FREIGHT PROJECTS AT THE CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

Proposed Activities:

Support efforts to fund goods movement and freight projects through the CTC;

Advocate that Los Angeles County receive a proportionate share of funding through the State’s Trade Corridor Enhancement Program and other state funding for zero-emission heavy-duty trucks;

Advocate for the deployment of clean-fuel trucks funded by the State in Los Angeles County;

Support regional and statewide efforts to secure and preserve funding for freight corridors; and

Support regional and statewide efforts to fund innovations in clean-freight technology including the deployment of on-dock rail improvements, clean vehicle charging infrastructure, and zero-emission trucks.



**GOAL #14: SPONSOR LEGISLATION THAT WOULD ENHANCE METRO'S ABILITY TO DELIVER ITS PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

Proposed Activities:

Sponsor ethics-related legislation to align Metro with other agencies for proper benchmarking and permit more efficient business practices.