Metro

Board Report

File #: 2025-0307, **File Type:** Contract **Agenda Number:**

REVISED
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
JUNE 26, 2025

SUBJECT: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION

AUTHORIZE the Chief Executive Officer to:

A. EXECUTE a new collective bargaining agreement with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Union (Teamsters) for the Transit Ambassador job classification effective July 1, 2025;

B. AMEND the FY26 Budget in the amount of $11.8 million for the implementation of the new wages and benefits for the approval of the final collective bargaining agreement;

C. ADD 388 contract positions (Teamsters) comprised of 309 Transit Ambassador Program staff who are currently in the field, and 79 new Transit Ambassadors to continue and expand the visible presence and in-person support across the Metro transit system and at the new Metro/LAX Transit Center, Foothill Extension and Purple Line Extension and additional high priority bus routes;

D. ADD 49 non-contract positions for the Transit Ambassador Program for Supervisors to oversee Ambassador staff in the field. These employees will be represented by AFSCME Local 363 4 upon ratification and Board approval of an agreement with the union; and

E. ADD 2 non-contract positions to oversee expanded day to day operations, staff training, reporting and customer experience improvements related to the Transit Ambassador Program.

ISSUE

In October 2023, the Board approved making the Transit Ambassador pilot program permanent and bringing it in-house. Metro initiated negotiations with union leadership, resulting in a new Teamsters agreement to represent Transit Ambassador personnel. This collective bargaining agreement supports the Board's decision to bring the program in-house. Staff requests to modify the FY26 Budget to add the positions necessary to bring the Ambassadors in-house, as well as additional positions for the expansion of the Ambassador program. Negotiations with AFSCME, who will

represent the Supervisors, is not yet complete. The Supervisors will be hired as non-contract employees until an agreement is reached.

BACKGROUND

In June of 2020, the Metro Board approved a motion by Directors Bonin, Garcetti, Hahn, Dupont-Walker, and Solis (Attachment A) to create a transit ambassador program that provides a staffed presence at Metro facilities and on Metro vehicles. Following a competitive procurement process in 2022, the Board awarded contracts to support a Transit Ambassador Pilot Program that would introduce visible, uniformed, unarmed staff presence on the Metro system to provide in-person, care-based assistance to riders, with the primary objective of enhancing the overall customer experience with Metro.

In September 2022, Metro introduced the Transit Ambassador Pilot Program. Ambassadors were deployed primarily across the rail system as they were hired and trained. On March 6, 2023, Metro officially launched the program with 300 trained Ambassadors. Transit Ambassadors quickly became an integral component of Metro's public safety ecosystem, alongside homeless outreach teams, Metro transit security officers, contracted law enforcement, and security.

In October 2023, following a staff evaluation of the first year of the pilot program, the Board approved making the Transit Ambassador Program permanent and bringing the program in-house. As a result, Metro commenced preparations for contract negotiations with Teamsters leadership to transition Transit Ambassador staff from contract to Metro full-time equivalent personnel. Staff conducted workshops for labor and management to come together and explore ridership trends, security within the system, and public/private partnerships. These workshops allowed both parties to understand each other's interests and, most importantly, joint interests and common goals.

The preparation for contract negotiations left all parties with a clear vision of the direction Metro is heading and a path to making meaningful contributions in the future. Prior to beginning formal negotiations, the following principles were identified to guide work at the bargaining tables:

- The users of Metro services and the taxpayers within Los Angeles County are key stakeholders. It is excellence in service and support that they have come to expect and that they deserve.
- Understanding that Metro's workforce is essential to the agency's ability to deliver excellent service and support.
- Metro's labor agreements provide the framework for commitments to each other. The agreements include the guidelines, the work rules and the acknowledgement of joint interests and respective interests.
- It is Metro's intent to negotiate agreements in good faith, to build a stronger organization and to be financially prudent and good stewards of taxpayer dollars.
- Recognizing that as Metro moves into the future, the agency is evolving in the use of technologically advanced equipment.
- Commitment to honor Metro's agreements and to be transparent in all efforts to lead Metro into the future of the industry.

DISCUSSION

Staff has been addressing areas for program improvement, including enhanced training, communications tools and deployment strategies to ensure a friendly, uniformed presence at Metro stations, and aboard trains and buses.

Labor Negotiations

As of May 15, 2025, Metro reached a tentative agreement with Teamsters on the new labor agreement for the Transit Ambassador job classification for a term of four years, effective July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2029. Metro Transit Ambassadors are not security officers and do not replace existing security personnel or law enforcement. Rather, they are an added workforce that collaborates with other Metro departments to maintain public safety. Benefits of the agreement include:

- Comprehensive compensation package covering wages and benefits;
- Refined guidelines regarding work shifts to enhance coverage and safety across the transit system;
- Streamlined qualifications to codify Metro's onboarding process, hiring and retention efforts specific to this new job classification.

Teamster members ratified their tentative agreement on June 18, 2025, with a 67% yes vote. This new labor agreement is now being presented to the Board for approval. The new agreement for Teamsters will commence July 1, 2025.

Currently, there are 333 contracted Ambassador staff (285 Ambassadors and 48 Supervisors), with 100% having served as Ambassadors for more than one year. As part of Metro's commitment to continuous improvement and inclusivity, contracted Ambassador staff in good standing will begin full transition from contracted positions to Metro employment beginning July 1, 2025. Consistent with Metro's Worker Retention Policy, staff will focus on transitioning these staff within the first 90 days before hiring any new Ambassadors. This effort aligns with our mission to support and uplift all members of our workforce while ensuring a higher standard of service for our patrons.

As illustrated in the financial impact section of this report, Metro is committed to competitive wages, worker stability, and career pathways, three of the key reasons for bringing the ambassador program in-house.

Transitioning Staff in-House and Expanding the Program

The first phase of the recruitment transition of the Transit Ambassador Program, Staff will hire all current contract Transit Ambassadors and Supervisors, who would like to join the agency and are in good standing. The second phase of the recruitment will expand hiring efforts to include additional Transit Ambassadors to support the expansion of Metro's rail system at the LAX/Metro Transit Center, four new stations that will open as part of the Foothill Extension (A line to Pomona), and new three stations that will open as part of the D (Purple) Line Extension. As Metro continues to invest in bus-only lanes to improve speed and reliability, dedicated Transit Ambassador bus riding teams will

complement this investment by ensuring a safe, welcoming, and customer-friendly experience. These Transit Ambassadors will be deployed on some of Metro's busiest lines, supporting the more than 70 miles of dedicated bus lanes now in operation. As has always been the case, Transit Ambassador deployments are flexible and can be adjusted to meet specific needs on the system.

To complete the in-house transition, the Board must approve the modification to the FY26 budget to add salary and benefits for the following positions:

- (309) contract positions (TEAMSTERS) to hire existing Transit Ambassador Staff to maintain current deployment.
- (79) Additional Transit Ambassador positions (TEAMSTERS) to staff the LAX/Metro Transit Center, A Line to Pomona Extension, the D (Purple) Line Extension, and high priority bus lines.
- (49) Non-contract positions for the Transit Ambassador Supervisors to manage Ambassador staff in the field. These staff will be represented by AFSCME once contract negotiations are completed, ratified, and approved by the Board.
- (2) Additional Non-Contract Program Management Staff - These roles will oversee daily operations, monitor field performance, and provide essential administrative support needed to effectively manage the program in-house. The program management team will include a Deputy Executive Officer who will be responsible for overseeing more than 400 full-time Ambassador program employees, and an Administrative Analyst to support data analytics and human resource functions for the expanded workforce.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

The recommendations' approval will allow Metro to meet the evolving needs of the transit system. Public expectations for safety and accountability require a more integrated and sustainable approach. Additionally, approval of the collective bargaining agreement has a positive impact on safety due to the negotiated work rules directly related to safety.

The recommendations support Metro's commitment to improving the perception and experience of public safety across the transit system. Transit Ambassadors play a vital, non-law enforcement role in Metro's layered public safety approach-offering customer support, de-escalation assistance, and helping to connect individuals in need with social services. Bringing the program in-house will allow Metro to strengthen oversight, ensure consistent customer service standards, expand coverage as needed, and better align Transit Ambassador activities with the agency's broader safety and customer experience goals.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Staff recommends an average salary and wage increase of 3.2% annually over the course of the contract, along with a 0.25% quarterly wage adjustment for the last three quarters of FY29.

FY26 Transit Ambassador Top Hourly Rate	FY27	FY28	FY29	Annual Average Rate
$26.00	2-4%	2-3%	5%	3.2%

The following chart shows the number of approved Ambassador positions transitioning to Metro at the various step progressions (A, B, C, and D). It also illustrates the total compensation package for Metro in comparison to the existing Ambassador contractors, Strive Well-Being Inc. and RMI International Inc.:

Category	Step A: Metro (6 Employees)	Step B: Metro (0 Employees)	Step C: Metro (156 Employees)	Step D: Metro (147 Employees)	Strive Well-Being, Inc. (base wage $19.96 + health and welfare opt-out $5.95 = $25.91)	RMI International Inc. (base wage $21.60 + health and welfare opt-out $4.23 = $25.83)
Salary Offered (Hourly Rate)	$ 22.32	$ 23.55	$ 24.77	$ 26.00	$ 25.91	$ 25.83
Salary Offered (Annual)	$ 46,425.60	$ 48,984.00	$ 51,521.60	$ 54,080.00	$ 53,892.80	$ 53,726.40
Health Benefits	$ 26,501.58	$ 26,501.58	$ 26,501.58	$ 26,501.58	$ 3,661.14	$ 3,989.47
Retirement Contribution	$ 4,813.12	$ 4,813.12	$ 4,813.12	$ 4,813.12	Not provided	Not provided
Total Compensation	$ 77,740.30	$ 80,298.70	$ 82,836.30	$ 85,394.70	$ 57,553.94	$ 57,715.87

Health Benefits for Metro includes: Medical, Dental, Vision, Life and Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance, Long Term Disability, Holiday (15 days), Vacation & Sick Benefits

Health Benefits for Strive and RMI are added into their salary hourly rate. Also included are: Long Term Disability, Holiday Pay (5 days) and Paid Time Off.

Retirement Contribution: CalPERS 2% @ 62 Plan (8.9% Employer Portion; 8% Employee portion)

The FY26 budget impact is $11,800,000 under Cost Center 2325, Transit Ambassador Program, Project 300040- Rail Operations Management and Admin and Project 306006- Systemwide Bus Ops Management and Admin.

Impact to Budget

The funding for this amendment will be Federal, State, and Local sources, which are eligible for Bus and Rail Operations.

EQUITY PLATFORM

The collective bargaining agreement with Teamsters, effective July 1, 2025, has considered equity impacts such as annual wage increases and benefits, which will help with retention and recruitment and ensure that Metro's transportation system is safe for customers, employees, and the communities It serves.

The Transit Ambassador Program will continue to assign unarmed staff to work in high need areas, including bus stops/stations and rail stations serving Equity Focus Communities (EFCs). In response to growing calls for reforms, the Transit Ambassador Program will continue to emphasize compassion and a culture of care, treating all transit riders, employees, and community members with dignity and

respect. In addition, most riders agree that seeing Ambassadors on Metro makes them feel safer; this number increases with people of color (Asian/Pacific Islanders - 70%, Hispanics/Latinos - 68%, women - 66%, and households with lower income - 66%; Source - Ambassador Program Survey, July -Aug 2023).

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED OUTCOME

VMT and VMT per capita in Los Angeles County are lower than national averages, the lowest in the SCAG region, and on the lower end of VMT per capita statewide, with these declining VMT trends due in part to Metro's significant investment in rail and bus transit. * Metro's Board-adopted VMT reduction targets align with California's statewide climate goals, including achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. To ensure continued progress, all Board items are assessed for their potential impact on VMT.

Consistent with these targets, this item will likely decrease VMT in LA County, as it is related to operational activities that will improve, benefit and encourage taking transit, including providing support services to transit service. Metro's Board-adopted VMT reduction targets were designed to build on the success of existing investments, and this item aligns with those objectives.

The Metro Transit Ambassadors are a diverse group of individuals that travel throughout the bus and rails system to improve ridership experience by providing:

- Support in navigating the Metro system.
- Information to connect riders with resources (e.g., providing directions, information on how to pay fares, or services available through our homeless outreach teams).
- Report any maintenance, cleanliness or safety issues throughout the system.

*Based on population estimates from the United States Census and VMT estimates from Caltrans' Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) data between 2001-2019.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Staff recommendations support LA Metro's Vision 2028 goals in the following manner:

GOAL: Deliver outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system:
Recruit, retain, and train employees with the training necessary to effectively and compassionately ensure that Metro's transportation system is safe for customers and employees.

GOAL: Enhance communities and lives through mobility and access to opportunity:
Provide opportunity for union members to support the delivery of transportation service by ensuring safety throughout the transit network and the communities Metro serves within Los Angeles County.

GOAL: Provide responsive, accountable, and trustworthy governance within the Metro organization:
During negotiations, staff established a stronger relationship of trust by using the "interest based/collaborative" negotiation style. This creates a better working relationship with the unions and reduces tension and friction between labor and management.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board may choose not to approve the new collective bargaining agreement or staffing requests; however, this is not recommended as it would contradict the Board's directive to make the Transit Ambassador pilot program permanent and bring it in-house. It would also be contrary to the agreement reached in good faith between labor and management, which forms the foundation of our commitment to represented Transit Ambassador employees. Additionally, such action would require an extension of the current contracts that are set to expire on August 31, 2025. This alternative is not recommended as it is not responsive to Metro's goal to improve the customer experience.

NEXT STEPS

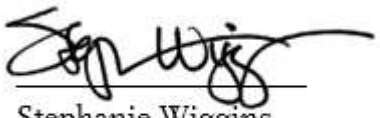
Staff will amend the FY26 budget, implement the new collective bargaining agreement, and complete all necessary actions to bring contracted Transit Ambassadors personnel in-house over the next 90 days. At the same time, staff will continue negotiations with AFSCME over representation for the Supervisors and will bring an agreement to the Board for approval as soon as an agreement is reached. After 90 days, staff will begin to hire for the expansion Transit Ambassador positions.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment A - Motion 37

Prepared by: Karen Parks, Senior Director, Customer Programs & Services, (213) 922-4612
Vanessa Smith, Executive Officer, Customer Care, (213) 922-7009
Nancy Saravia, Deputy Executive Officer, Administration, (213) 922-1217
Don Howey, Executive Officer, Administration (213) 922-8867
Cristian Leiva, Deputy Chief People Officer, Labor Negotiations (213) 922-3035

Reviewed by:
Jennifer Vides, Chief Customer Experience Officer, (213) 922-4060
Dawn Jackson-Perkins, Chief People Officer, (213) 418-3166



Stephanie Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer

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

File #: 2020-0429, **File Type:** Motion / Motion Response **Agenda Number:** 37.

OPERATIONS, SAFETY, AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE
JUNE 18, 2020

Motion by:

DIRECTORS BONIN, GARCETTI, HAHN, DUPONT-WALKER, AND SOLIS

A Community Safety Approach to System Security and Law Enforcement

On March 13, 2020, Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old emergency room technician, was killed in her home by a Louisville police officer who was carrying out a search warrant in the middle of the night. On May 25, 2020, George Floyd was killed by a Minneapolis police officer during an arrest for allegedly using a counterfeit $20 bill. These deaths and many before them, including here in Los Angeles, have sparked demonstrations for racial justice and a national conversation about the appropriate role of police in our society and the particular threats faced by Black people during interactions with law enforcement.

Community leaders are demanding a shift in how agencies deliver public safety at every level of government. This includes reforming police practices as well as reallocating resources typically devoted to policing to other forms of community safety. In a transit environment, safety is typically provided through design, staff presence, aid station access, and law enforcement. Given recent events, it is prudent for Metro to reevaluate its safety strategies to ensure it is meeting the needs and expectations of our riders. Metro should work in partnership with community leaders to re-envision transit safety and community-based approaches to policing leading up to and as part of the 2022 renewal of the multiagency police contract.

SUBJECT: A COMMUNITY SAFETY APPROACH TO SYSTEM SECURITY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE Motion by Directors Bonin, Garcetti, Hahn, Dupont-Walker, and Solis that the Board direct the Chief Executive Officer to:

A. Establish a Transit Public Safety Advisory Committee. This committee should incorporate the existing Community Safety & Security Working Group and include additional perspectives that represent Metro's ridership and advocacy organizations, including but not limited to racial,

cultural, gender, income, geography, immigration status, and housing status.

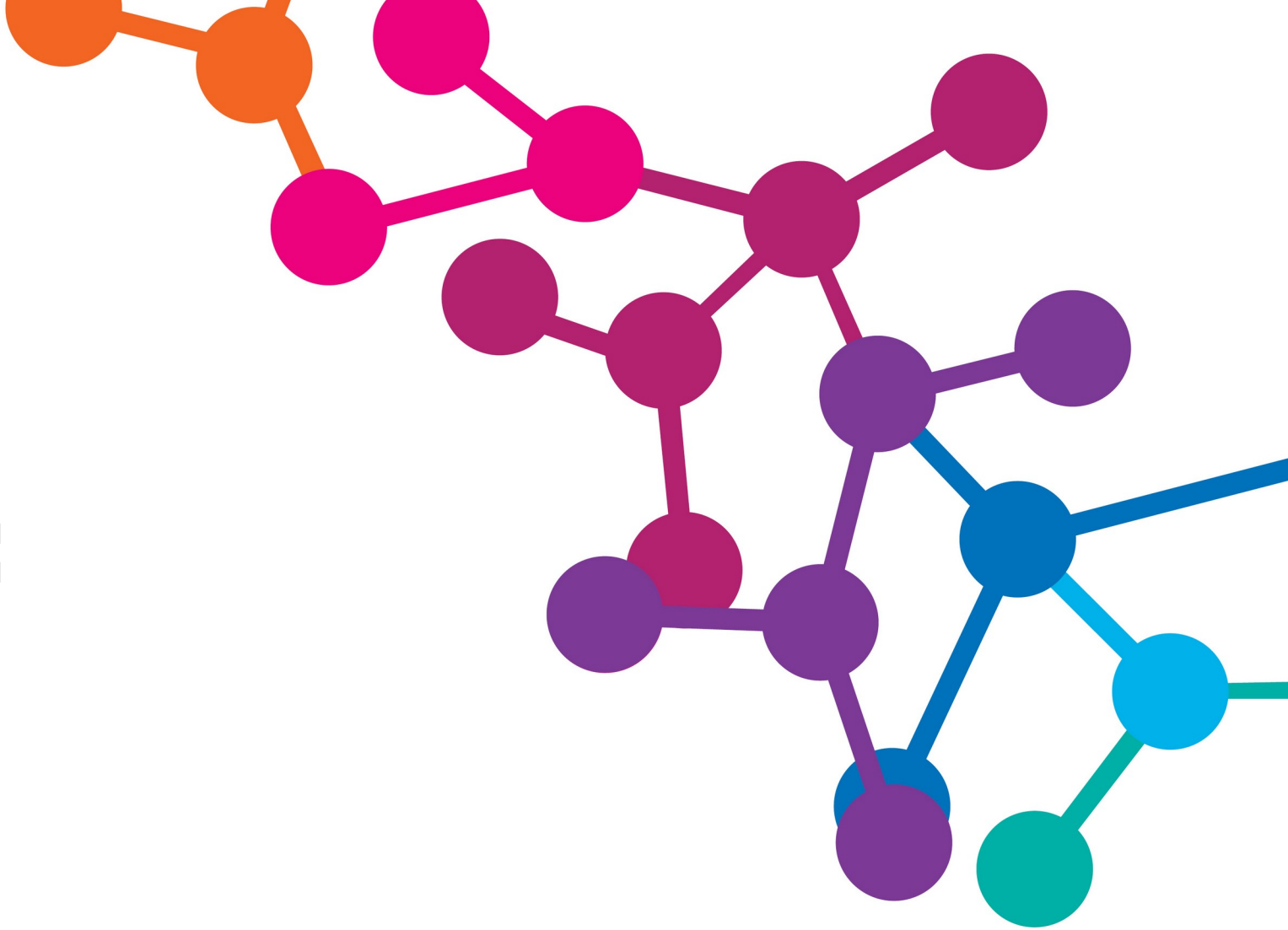
B. In partnership with the Advisory Committee, Office of Civil Rights, Executive Officer for Equity & Race, and Executive Officer for Customer Experience, develop a community-based approach to public safety on the transit system, including but not limited to:

    1. A transit ambassador program that provides staffed presence at Metro facilities and on Metro vehicles.
    2. Alternatives to armed law enforcement response to nonviolent crimes and code of conduct violations.
    3. Greater community stewardship of transit spaces, such as supporting street vending in transit plazas.
    4. The Universal Blue Light program proposed in Metro's June 2018 ridership initiatives (BF 2018-0365).
    5. Education about and expansion of fare discount programs.
    6. Outreach and services for unhoused individuals.
    7. A shift of resources from armed law enforcement to the above strategies.

C. Consult with the Advisory Committee when developing the new scope of services, budget, and other provisions of the multiagency police contract renewal.

D. Report back to the Operations, Safety, and Customer Experience Committee in 90 days, and quarterly thereafter until the 2022 contract renewal. In the final quarterly report of 2022, include an external, third-party evaluation of the effectiveness of the Advisory Committee and a recommendation on whether it should continue.

Transit Ambassador: Collective Bargaining Agreement



Metro

Regular Board Meeting
June 26, 2025

Transit Ambassadors – Collective Bargaining Agreement

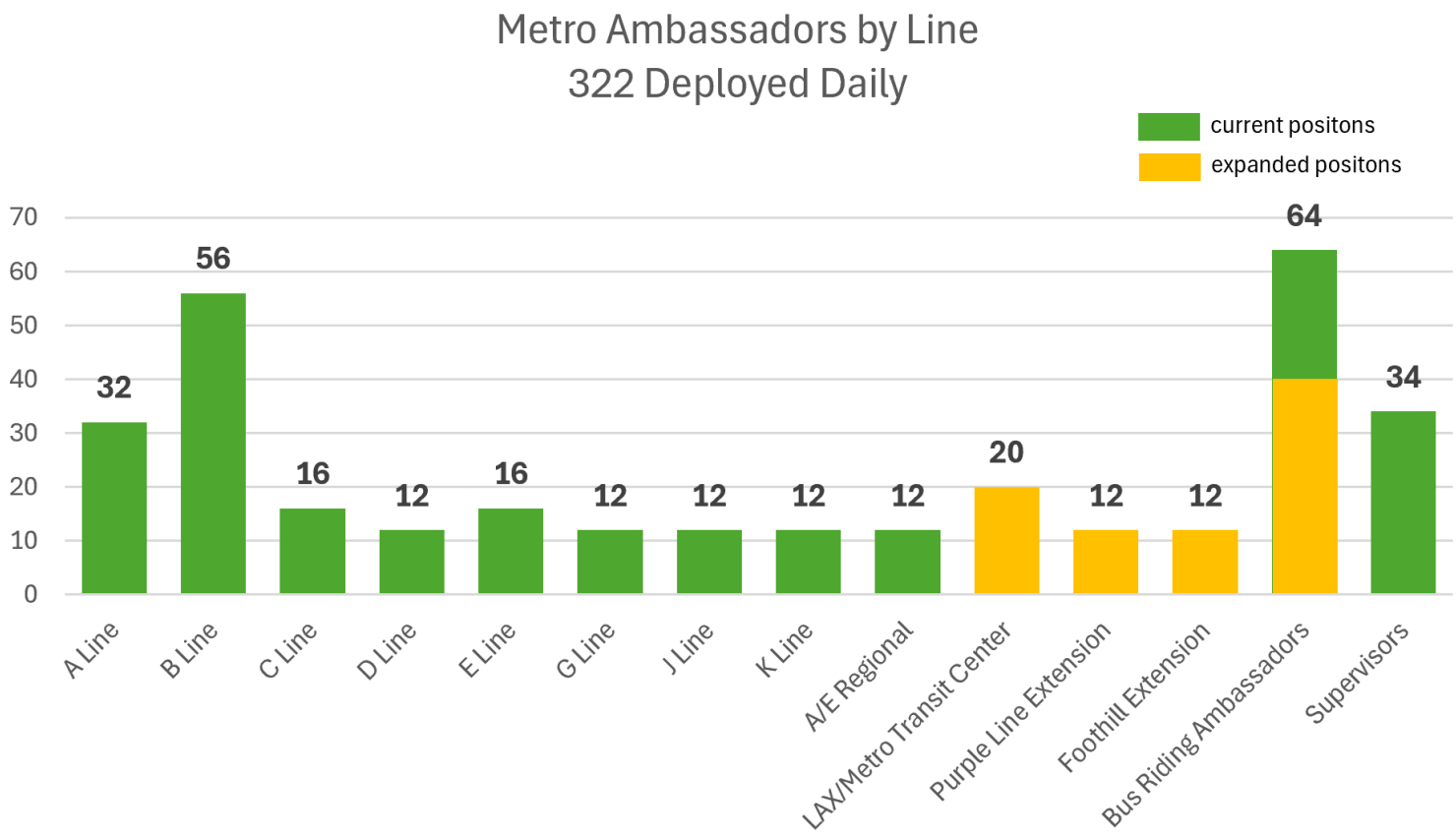
- On May 15, 2025: Metro reached a tentative agreement with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Union (Teamsters) for a new collective bargaining agreement for the Transit Ambassador job classification
- On June 18, 2025: Approximately 67% of the Teamsters membership who were present voted to ratify the tentative agreement which includes:
  - Four-year term through June 30, 2029
  - $26 top hourly rate for FY26 and benefits as part of Metro's comprehensive compensation package
  - 3.2% average annual wage increases over the life of the contract
  - 0.25% annual quarterly wage adjustments for the last 3 quarters of FY29

Metro

Transit Ambassadors – In House Transition and Expansion

Approval for positions:

- 309 current Ambassadors for all rail lines, J and G lines and 4 local bus lines
- NEW: 79 Ambassadors for LAX/MTC Transit Center, A (Foothill) Line to Pomona Extension, D (Purple) Line extension and to expand bus riding coverage to six high priority lines
- NEW: 2 additional program management FTEs to support in-house program and expansion
- 49 Ambassador Supervisors



Metro

Staff Recommendation

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C. ADD 388 contract positions (Teamsters) comprised of 309 Transit Ambassador Program staff who are currently in the field, and 79 new Transit Ambassadors to continue and expand the visible presence and in-person support across the Metro transit system and at the new Metro/LAX Transit Center, Foothill Extension and Purple Line Extension and additional high priority bus routes;

D. ADD 49 non-contract positions for the Transit Ambassador Program for Supervisors to oversee Ambassador staff in the field. These employees will be represented by AFSCME Local 3634 upon ratification and Board approval of an agreement with the union; and

E. ADD 2 non-contract positions to oversee expanded day to day operations, staff training, reporting and customer experience improvements related to the Transit Ambassador Program.

Metro

Next Steps

- Amend the FY26 Budget to implement the new Collective Bargaining Agreement (Teamsters)
- Transition Ambassador staff in-house:
  - Ambassador staff in good standing will begin full transition from contract positions to Metro employment beginning July 1, 2025
- Continue to negotiate with AFSCME regarding Ambassador Supervisors
- Hire for Ambassador expansion positions

Metro