South Bay Cities Council of Governments

Infrastructure Working Group (IWG)

AGENDA
Wednesday, January 13, 2021
12:00 pm – 1:30 p. m.

NOTE: The meeting will be conducted via Zoom

ACCESSING THE MEETING:
After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.
https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcrcO6upzspHdLdLZ9Ir5zxqSncddiZY9ew

Future IWG meetings are scheduled to be held:
February 10, 2021
March 10, 2021
April 14, 2021

12:00 p. m. December 9, 2020 IWG Meeting Notes Approval (Attachment A)
12:02 p. m. Agency & Other Update Reports
- SBCCOG – Program update – Jacki Bacharach
- LA County DPW – South Bay Traffic Forum – Update
- Caltrans District 7 South Bay Projects – Update
- L. A. Metro - Updates
  - L. A. Metro Board Actions - Update
  - Metro TAC & Streets and Freeway Subcommittee Actions / TAC Representatives

12:15 p. m. SBCCOG Metro Budget Request Process Status (Attachment B)
12:30 p. m. COVID 19 Recovery Update
- Metro Recovery Task Force Recommendations (Attachment C)

1:00 p. m. Spotlight Presentation: South Bay Fiber Network Applications – Roundtable Discussion
1:20 p. m. January SBCCOG Transportation Update (Attachment E)
1:25 p. m. 3-Month Look Ahead (Attachment F)
1:30 p. m. Announcements / Adjournment

NOTE: To include an item on the February 10th agenda, e-mail to lantzsh10@gmail.com by February 2nd.
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South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Infrastructure Working Group Meeting Notes – December 9, 2020 (Held via Zoom)

Attendees: Chair Ted Semaan (Redondo Beach); Gilbert Marquez (Carson); Lifan Xu (El Segundo); William Mendoza (Gardena); Stephanie Katsouleas & Erik Zandvliet (Manhattan Beach); Ramzi Awwad (Rancho Palos Verdes); Jimmy Shih & Sergio Carvajal (Caltrans); Andres Narvaez, Pamela Manning, Ron Matsuoka, John Ickis & William Johnson (LA County DPW); Mark Dierking (Metro); Jacki Bacharach, Steve Lantz & David Leger (SBCCOG); Steven Anderson (DEA Inc); Wayne Richardson (HDR); David Chow, Peter Richards, Jason King & Mahrokh Arefi (IBI Group); Myriam Frausto (MarkThomas); Janna McKhann (NexTech); Jeff Cooper (NV5); Cheryl DeMucci (Paragon Partners); Zak Kaldawi (PMCS Group); Diego Cadena (WKE)

I. Self-Introductions and Approval of October 14, 2020 IWG Meeting Notes – Chair Ted Semaan called the meeting to order at 12:05 pm. The October 14, 2020 meeting notes were approved without objection.

II. Agency & Other Update Reports
   A. SBCCOG: Ms. Bacharach reported that SBCCOG is working with the Energy Coalition on energy efficiency projects in municipal facilities. The SBCCOG Board held a special meeting to discuss the recent LA County ban on outdoor dining in response to rising COVID-19 cases. The Board voted to send letters to LA County and the Governor and also instructed staff to work with Beach Cities Health District to look into the formation of a South Bay Health Department that could issue sub-regional health directives in future health emergencies. The SBCCOG is also looking into hiring a regional planner to help with RHNA and other regional planning projects. Ms. Bacharach reported that Rex Richardson won the SCAQMD seat vacated by Judy Mitchell upon her retirement. Finally, Ms. Bacharach announced that the 2021 General Assembly will be taking place virtually on March 18th.

   B. South Bay Traffic Forum (LACDPW): Mr. Ickis reported updates on the various County ITS and TSSP projects taking place in the South Bay. The detailed updates are included in a written report available here: https://www.southbaycities.org/sites/default/files/infrastructure/HANDOUT_ITS%20%26%20TSSP%20status%20December%202020_0.pdf

   C. Caltrans District 7: Mr. Shih announced that the I-405/Crenshaw Blvd. project is expected to be awarded in February 2021. Earlier in the month, the CTC approved the staff recommendation for the I-105 ExpressLanes as well as a couple of SR 91 Freeway projects.

   D. LA Metro
      1) LA Metro Board: Mr. Dierking reported that the C (Green) Line extension to Torrance is moving forward with tentative EIR scoping meetings scheduled for February 24th and 27th. Stakeholder meetings are also being scheduled in the weeks leading up to the scoping meetings.
      2) Metro TAC & Streets and Freeway Subcommittee: Mr. Marquez reported that he missed the November meeting, but that during the October meeting, the TAC received updates on CTC actions. He also asked that others consider volunteering to serve as the TAC representative as he must step away due to staffing shortages at the city. If you are interested in serving, please contact David Leger. Mr. Zandvliet reported that the Streets and Freeways subcommittee was informed that HSIP Cycle 10 project decisions are expected by the end of January. Over 100 applications were submitted from Caltrans D7 alone. The 2nd round of ATP grant award recommendations are expected in February. Over 453 applications were submitted state-wide, totaling over $2.2B in requests. If a project is not awarded funding by the CTC, it can still be considered for funding at the regional level.

III. SBCCOG Metro Budget Request Process Initiation and Overview
Mr. Lantz announced that SBCCOG staff has sent out documents to lead agency staff requesting updates on their existing Measure R SBHP and Measure M MSP projects as part of the annual Metro Budget Request process. Funding priority will be given to those projects needing additional funding that are already under construction or design and, if additional funding is available, new projects will be considered as a third priority.

Mr. Lantz took this time to review the Metro Highway Program modernization recommendations. The Metro Board convened a subcommittee of Board staff to look at ways to modernize the Highway Department. The group developed a set of recommendations that would broaden the list of eligible project types as well as update the evaluation method to look at Vehicle Miles Traveled instead of Level of Service. The updates do not require ATP to
be included in project proposals but allow ATP projects to be standalone projects when previously they could not qualify.
The handouts on this item are available here:

Ms. Bacharach also brought up the Metro Recovery Task Force recommendations that were presented at the December Metro PAC meeting. Metro is asking for comments to be submitted on the recommendations over the holidays, which was objected to by the PAC. Metro CEO Phil Washington is considering an extension. Recommendations include potentially huge changes, such as repurposing of Local Return funds for Metro operations and use of subregional funding for Metro capital projects.

IV. **Spotlight Presentation: Parametric Planning & Curb Asset Management**
Mr. Chow introduced himself and gave a brief overview of IBI Group and some of their projects. Jason King explained that parametric design is a process based on algorithmic thinking that allows the user to define, encode, and clarify the relationship between design intent and design response. It uses complex computer algorithms to analyze the impacts of certain variables on design plans, saving planners countless hours. IBI Group is currently working with Metro to design the North San Fernando Valley BRT line to analyze three potential alignments to determine which best supported Metro’s Transit Oriented Communities goals and objectives. IBI’s tool analyzes hundreds of square miles in seconds, allowing planners access to data that was likely impossible to gather in traditional methods.
More detail is available online here:

Peter Richards presented on IBI Group’s CurbIQ solution that aims to help cities effectively manage, maintain, and disseminate curbside restrictions and potential ways to monetize the asset. Mr. Richards touched on curbside challenges such as the evolving use of the curb while curbside management practices are stuck in the past. He went on to discuss digital solutions such as SharedStreets or CurbIQ the potential applications for the technology.
Mr. Richards’ presentation is available online here:

V. **COVID-19 Roundtable**
Mr. Semaan shared that in Redondo Beach, there was one restaurant that had been defying the LA County outdoor dining ban. The County Health Department has visited the restaurant. However, with the State order in effect, local bans are irrelevant at this time.

Mr. Zandvliet reported that Manhattan Beach has been working with restaurants to modify agreements to change the outdoor dining areas to public parklets with seating that is open to the public. The restaurant would not be able to serve the person there, but customers could choose to go sit down in the parklet after receiving their takeout food.

VI. **December 2020 SBCCOG Transportation Update** – Received and filed.

VII. **Three-Month Look Ahead** – Received and filed.

VIII. **Announcements & Adjournment**
Chair Semaan adjourned the meeting at 1:20 p.m. until January 13th, 2021 (public meeting). To include an item on the agenda, please email Steve Lantz (lantzsh10@gmail.com) by January 4, 2021.
January 11, 2021

TO:          SBCCOG Transportation Committee  
FROM:        Steve Lantz, SBCCOG Transportation Director  
RE:          SBCCOG FY 2021-22 Metro Budget Request Update

**Adherence to Strategic Plan:**

*Goal A: Environment, Transportation and Economic Development.* Facilitate, implement and/or educate members and others about environmental, transportation and economic development programs that benefit the South Bay.

**Background**

SBCCOG annually submits a Metro Budget Request (MBR) to L.A. Metro for Measure R South Bay Highway Program funds and the three Measure M subregional program funds available to the South Bay jurisdictions. The annual submittal identifies changes in required funding for active South Bay Measure R and Measure M projects and additional Measure R or Measure M funding requested by lead agencies for their active projects and new projects.

The FY 2021-22 MBR development process has been underway since September 2020. The deadline for local lead agencies to submit new project applications and supplemental funding requests for active projects was December 18, 2020. Additional funds were requested for 5 active projects and 2 new projects totaling $31 million. This amount is within the current Measure R SBHP and Measure M MSP funding capacity. The appropriate source of funding for each eligible project will be determined during January 2021. L.A. Metro and SBCCOG staff will work with project applicants to create a prioritized MBR list of projects constrained by annual funding anticipated to be available in each of the four South Bay Measure R and M subregional funding categories.

The projects will be prioritized based on the milestones achieved to date. Projects under construction needing additional funds will be given the highest priority followed by projects ready to sign construction agreements, projects in the design phase, projects that have completed environmental documentation, and finally, projects that are defined sufficiently to enable environmental documentation to begin. Lead agencies must develop the initial project conceptual design and justify project need and benefits using local funds prior to being eligible for the subregional funds.

The draft MBR will be considered by the SBCCOG Transportation Committee at its February 8, 2021 meeting and by the SBCCOG Board of Directors at its February 25, 2021 meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Receive and file
To: SBCCOG Transit Operators Working Group (January 7, 2021 meeting)
SBCCOG Transportation Committee (January 11, 2021 meeting)
SBCCOG Board of Directors (January 28, 2021 meeting)

From: Jacki Bacharach, Executive Director
Steve Lantz, Transportation Director

Subject: L. A. Metro COVID 19 Recovery Program

Adherence to Strategic Plan:

Goal A: Environment, Transportation, and Economic Development. Facilitate, implement, and/or educate members and others about environmental, transportation, and economic development programs that benefit the South Bay. Strategy 5 – Actively pursue opportunities for infrastructure funding for member agencies.

BACKGROUND

The L.A. Metro Board of Directors directed its Office of Extraordinary Innovation (OEI) to prepare COVID 19 Recovery Plan recommendations to address continuing reduced ridership and revenue. Attachment D, Exhibit 1 contains a matrix of the Metro staff’s draft final recommended actions with annotations by SBCCOG staff. A draft SBCCOG comment letter is in Attachment E. Since Metro has extended the comment deadline to February 8, 2021, a letter needs to be approved by the SBCCOG Board of Directors at its January 28, 2021 meeting.

The Recovery Plan outlines the set of transit ridership recovery challenges that are facing Los Angeles County, including COVID 19 not being under control, and recurrent stay at home orders, continuance of racial and economic inequities, record unemployment, loss of sales tax revenue and resultant negative impacts on regional and local budgets, increased traffic and increased vehicle ownership. The recommendations incorporate Metro actions described in its recently completed NextGen Transit Study in addition to short- and long-term strategies to generate new revenue and attract previous and new riders to the L. A. County transit system.

Beyond the short-term impacts of COVID 19, the report asserts a positive correlation between an increase in auto ownership and reduction in transit usage. However, transit usage was on the decline before the emergence of the pandemic, therefore SBCCOG staff believes that more analysis is needed before a causal relationship between a decline in transit usage and an increase in auto ownership should be assumed.

In addition, there may be other factors beyond auto ownership to be considered, such as:
1. Concerns are not reduced significantly about health and security risks with transit use;
2. Reductions in convenient and reliable transit availability in the suburbs as Metro and other operators focus on their service to improve transit equity and access to opportunity; 
3. The potential impact of a long-term continuation of remote-work business models and technology innovations that may create a “new normal” reduction in work-related vehicle trips and vehicle miles travelled; and 
4. The continued growth of e-commerce and e-services as customers continue to shop and obtain services on-line after the COVID 19 threat lessens. 
5. The emergence of public and private shared-ride mobility-as-a-service (MAAS) options and smart multi-modal payment systems (e. g.: Metro’s new Microtransit pilot program in the LAX / Inglewood area; Metro’s new TAPForce multi-modal smart wallet payment system).

RECOMMENDATION
After hearing Metro’s presentation, review the policies and make a recommendation to the SBCCOG Board on the attached matrix and comment letter.

Exhibits:
1. SBCCOG Matrix of Metro Recovery Task Force Recommendations
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Metro Recovery Task Force Final Recommendations</th>
<th>Costs</th>
<th>Timeframe (SBCCOG est.)</th>
<th>SBCCOG Staff Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Survey riders on current travel patterns, modes, future plans and customer experience</td>
<td>negligible</td>
<td>completed</td>
<td>Survey sent to 11,000 previous on-board survey respondents. 23% response rate. Effort was entirely in house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fund Safe Streets</td>
<td>no new cost</td>
<td>completed</td>
<td>Metro in May allowed Cities that received 2020 Open Streets grants to repurpose $ on safe / slow streets programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Expand and Innovate cleaning - on high touch areas of infrastructure</td>
<td>$8.8 mil / yr.</td>
<td>immediate, ongoing</td>
<td>Staff is exploring a range of technology and chemical treatment options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Distribute masks to riders</td>
<td>$1.3 mil / yr.</td>
<td>immediate, ongoing?</td>
<td>Reduces conflicts with bus drivers. Funded through December 2020 (@$50,000); Needs additional funding to continue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Allow mask and personal sanitizer vending</td>
<td>potentially no new cost</td>
<td>immediate</td>
<td>Use Metro staff and licensed vendors at some stations where free masks are not being distributed by staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Implement smart phone contactless visual payment TAP application</td>
<td>revenue positive</td>
<td>completed for Apple phones, immediate for Android phones</td>
<td>Enables new fare revenue with rear door boarding by using contactless fare payment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Improve on-line public meeting protocols</td>
<td>negligible</td>
<td>immediate</td>
<td>Minor cost for Zoom licenses and WiFi hot spot for each meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Increase ventilation on buses, enhance HVAC filtration systems</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>Metro staff is testing 3-stage HVAC filtration system for future installation. Costs tbd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Support employee parents that cannot work from home</td>
<td>neutral?</td>
<td>immediate</td>
<td>Metro is implementing creative HR policies, childcare matching, TOWP donation, Metro villages at key stations for distance learning / telecommuting. SBCCOG is concerned that aggregate annual costs do not significantly impact operating and maintenance budgets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Restore service to stay ahead of demand, retain rear-door boarding</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>immediate, ongoing</td>
<td>Revenue is near zero (down $240 mil / year), Includes Next Gen Phase 1 service has lower revenue service hours (5.5 million / yr.) than pre-COVID (7 million / yr.); Metro monitors ridership/demand weekly. Cost impact depends on when Metro resumes fare enforcement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Study New Bike Share Models</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>Re-bid contract or bring ops/maintenance in house to be performed by Metro staff. TBD in early 2021. Limited savings in current budget.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Promote Metro Active Transportation (MAT)</strong> - walking and biking with more bike infrastructure and more Metro bikes</td>
<td>$120,000</td>
<td>immediate</td>
<td>Metro to fully fund MAT Cycle 1, pilot to distribute bikes, Adopt-A-Bike program using abandoned bikes.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td><strong>Allow and promote telework</strong> - new telework policy in January 2021</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>14% of Metro staff is currently telecommuting. Cost: $2,000 / participating employee for laptops, software, training offset by $13 mil. reduction in non-hq rent and reduced turnover ($10K - $30K per employee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td><strong>Install more Bus Lanes at congestion hot spots</strong> - on streets</td>
<td>negligible</td>
<td>1-5 years</td>
<td>Planning and installation of bus lanes are in current budget and included in NextGen capital program/ Needs concurrence of local jurisdictions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td><strong>“We’re Here for You.”</strong> marketing and communications campaign</td>
<td>$500,000 through 12/20.</td>
<td>immediate</td>
<td>Themes: Travel Safe, Cleaning efforts, service adjustments, rear-door boarding, social distancing, bus crowding, APTA's safety and Health Commitment program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td><strong>Increase Customer Ambassadors</strong> - non security staff</td>
<td>Annual cost: $55,000 to $7.4 mil.</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>Options range from 50 repurposed FTEs to 50 new FTEs. Staff seeking a Community Organization partner for a pilot. Project being “aligned” with Fareless System Initiative. New staff not included in Metro budgets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td><strong>Explore new mobility solutions</strong> - MicroTransit, Mobility on Demand</td>
<td>negligible</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>Mobility Services RFI responses being reviewed. No significant costs in FY 21. May reduce fixed -route transit demand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td><strong>Use budget to advance recovery</strong> - for Metro short-term operating and capital priorities</td>
<td>$1.5 million to $130 mil.</td>
<td>1-5 years depending on funding</td>
<td>Implement Next Gen speed/reliability improvements ($7 M), station and bus plaza expansion ($16.3 M), enhanced service on BRT and other routes ($107 M). Needs budget amendment for balance of FY 20-21 and beyond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td><strong>Reimagine capital projects</strong> - within Ordinance constraints</td>
<td>negligible</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>Recovery TF developed project assessment matrix tool to analyze projects based on enhanced mobility and ridership, equity and Title VI compliance, and health and economic development. Tool was not used for pandemic prioritization. No FY 20-21 budget impact, but potentially significant capital project impacts thereafter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td><strong>Better Address Homelessness</strong> - connect unhoused on Metro system with services and housing.</td>
<td>$5 mil. / yr.</td>
<td>1-5 years</td>
<td>Use Metro property for transitional housing through partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs). Needs further analysis of future Metro budget impacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td><strong>Run Express Buses on Improved HOV and Express Lanes</strong> - on freeways</td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>Advocates raising min. vehicle occupancy requirement and expanding ExpressLanes network to improve bus speed and efficiency.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td><strong>Accelerate Networks of complete streets</strong></td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td>Recommends creation of an internal Metro Complete Streets Plan of priority corridors. Needs concurrence of local jurisdictions. Not included in Metro budget.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fully integrate Transit in LA Region</td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td>5+ years</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>T. F. would have Metro drive regional, state and national mobility agendas and policies. Recommends one Integrated countywide fare (or fareless) structure, single/unified customer information location, enhanced data management through RIITS, enhance 511, updated signage at shared stops, seamless trip planning, more mid-day Metrolink service, synchronized shakeout dates between Metro and Munis. Needs new funding and concurrence of Muni Operators.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Offer incentives to reduce car ownership - and use transit</th>
<th>$15 mil. / 10,000 conversions</th>
<th>1-5 years, depending on funding</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Goal: get 10,000 new riders on transit and out of their car with a program of free transit, free/discounted bikes, mobility wallets, better bus options or other incentives for households to become car-free or car-light. Not included in Metro budget.</td>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Improve station amenities</th>
<th>tbd</th>
<th>1-5+ years</th>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>E.g.: food, retail, restrooms. Need to evaluated capital and operating costs, potential funding sources. Not included in Metro Budget.</td>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Improve Public Engagement and Strengthen Rider Voices</th>
<th>tbd</th>
<th>immediate, ongoing</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Examples: Include demographic metrics in outreach effectiveness to ensure Metro reaches the most impacted stakeholders and transit reliant communities; Create toolkit of Metro resources for riders; Elevate role of CAC; Overhaul website. Not included in Metro budget.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gather more data on equity and travel patterns</th>
<th>tbd</th>
<th>immediate, 1-3 years</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Centralize storage and availability of location-based services data in Metro ITS Department to better understand travel patterns, access to key destinations and mode share demographics. New staff and technology licenses not included in Metro budget.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Share data and information internally more openly and effectively</strong></td>
<td>tbd, potential cost savings</td>
<td>immediate</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td><strong>Accelerate Joint Development and Transit-Oriented Communities</strong></td>
<td>revenue generator</td>
<td>immediate, ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td><strong>Expand Region's broadband infrastructure</strong></td>
<td>tbd, potential cost savings and new revenue</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td><strong>Create green jobs and green infrastructure</strong></td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td>3-5 years depending on funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td><strong>Reimagine &quot;Destination Discounts&quot;</strong></td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td><strong>Study how Metro can reduce capital construction costs</strong></td>
<td>TBD, analysis costs are negligible</td>
<td>immediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td><strong>Build staff capacity</strong></td>
<td>25% potential savings</td>
<td>immediate, ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td><strong>Use Measure M and R Ordinances</strong></td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td><strong>Expand revenue - optimize commercial revenue opportunities</strong></td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td>1-5+ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td><strong>Identify funding for incentives to reduce car ownership and increased transit funding</strong></td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td>1-5+ years</td>
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Dear Chairman Garcetti:

The South Bay Cities Council of Governments would like to take the opportunity to comment on Metro’s Recovery Task Force – Draft Final Recommendations. Attached is a matrix summarizing the 37 recommendations and the SBCCOG’s related comments.

SBCCOG understands the urgency of mobility and fiscal challenges that are facing Los Angeles County transit operators and local jurisdictions, including: COVID 19 not being under control, continuance of racial and economic inequities, record unemployment, loss of sales tax revenue and resultant negative impacts on regional and local budgets, increased traffic and increased vehicle ownership. COVID continues to be a catastrophic event which, similar to a major earthquake or other region-wide disruption, requires recalculation of previous assumptions and plans, not just for Metro, but for all of the stakeholders that coordinate with Metro.

The Recovery Task Force recommendations provide an excellent starting point for a thoughtful reconsideration of L. A. County’s mobility priorities. SBCCOG agrees with and supports in concept many of the recommendations and we appreciate the effort required by the Metro Recovery Task Force to compile a conceptual set of investments. However, we believe it’s time to step back and determine what can reasonably be implemented over the next decade before any specific initiatives are considered in isolation as stand-alone actions.

We are concerned that the Board will take the entire list of 37 recommendations and consider approving most or all of them in one Board motion. Or alternatively, we would be concerned if the Board would be asked to approve each recommendation in isolation. We strongly encourage the Metro Board to adopt an implementation strategy that fully considers the inter-related mobility and financial aspects of the aggregated individual recommendations in light of current mandatory obligations and current commitments.

A comprehensive Recovery Implementation Strategy would identify:
1. **A comprehensive multi-year capital and operating plan.** The Board should be provided detail comparable to that found in Metro’s successful NextGen Bus Study. Although some recommendations can be implemented without affecting current capital and operating budget commitments, several recommendations, such as the fare-less system initiative, will have significant initial and ongoing costs and revenue impacts that will ripple across the agency’s current and future capital and operating budgets. Some recommendations may even require deferral or abandonment of current Board commitments. These far-reaching recommendations deserve more Board scrutiny before being included in Metro’s Short-Range financial plans or annual budgets.

2. **A 10-year implementation timeframe for each recommendation.** We believe the recommendations and their financial implications could be better addressed if they were grouped according to an implementation timeframe (e.g.: immediate, 1-3 years, 3-5 years, and 5+ years). This would allow Metro to evaluate new initiatives in the context of current commitments and anticipated resources over the next decade.

3. **An analysis of annual budgetary tradeoffs for each recommendation.** Some of the Plan’s elements include funding actions that have previously been approved by the Metro Board (e.g.: the NextGen Bus Study, the Congestion Reduction Program). We encourage Metro staff to identify the pre-existing funding sources and amounts of any prior Metro Board approvals for each near-term recommendation. For recommendations that lack sufficient prior funding, Metro should evaluate whether current commitments need to be deferred or abandoned to fund more critical and timely recommendations within available current or short-term budget resources.

4. **Secure partner commitments prior to approving recommendations.** Several of the initiatives such as acceleration of complete streets projects, joint development, and provision of new affordable housing around station areas require close cooperation with local jurisdictions that control land use and uses of local streets. Metro should involve all relevant public partners in the development of implementation plans for each of its recommendations. In addition, written concurrence from potential partners on the scope, funding sources and implementation timeframes should be secured before the Metro Board approves a multi-jurisdictional recommendation.

5. **Adopt specific Metro roles and funding commitments for “the trip not taken” applications.** In addition to building out the fiber-optic infrastructure throughout L. A. County, Metro has the opportunity to play a central role and be a funding source to enable standardized telework and e-commerce applications that support reduction of vehicle miles traveled, congestion reduction, equity, and access to opportunity. Metro also should provide technical assistance and regulatory guidance in the development of public infrastructure that will be needed for autonomous vehicles that will be used in goods movement and transit.
If there are any questions, please call:

Jacki Bacharach, SBCCOG Executive Director, at (310) 2 93-2612, or
Steve Lantz, SBCCOG Transportation Director, at (213) 494-8557.

Thank you for considering our input.

Sincerely,

Olivia Valentine
Board of Directors Chair
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Hawthorne City Council Member

cc: L. A. Metro Board of Directors
    SBCCOG Board of Directors
    Dr. Joshua Schank
    Jacki Bacharach, SBCCOG Executive Director
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January 2, 2021

TO: SBCCOG Transportation Committee  
    SBCCOG Infrastructure Working Group  
    SBCCOG Transit Operators Working Group  
    SBCCOG Board of Directors

FROM: Steve Lantz, SBCCOG Transportation Director

RE: SBCCOG Transportation Update Covering December 2020

Adherence to Strategic Plan:
Goal A: Environment, Transportation and Economic Development. Facilitate, implement and/or educate members and others about environmental, transportation and economic development programs that benefit the South Bay.

Federal

Biden Names Pete Buttigieg As Transportation Secretary
President-elect Joe Biden has nominated his former rival Pete Buttigieg as U. S. Secretary of Transportation. Buttigieg, former mayor of South Bend, Ind., is poised to become the first openly gay person confirmed by the Senate to a Cabinet post. At 38, Buttigieg would also add youth to an incoming administration that is dominated by leaders with decades of Washington experience.

Buttigieg will play a central role in shaping some of Biden’s leading policy priorities. Biden has pledged to spend billions on major infrastructure improvements and on retrofitting initiatives to help the U.S. battle climate change. He also wants to undo the Trump administration’s softened carbon emissions standards, sign a major infrastructure bill that was on the President’s desk but was threatened with a Trump veto as the new year began, and immediately mandate mask-wearing on airplanes and public transportation systems to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

Biden’s FCC and A Democratic Senate Could Change Broadband Internet Policy
President-elect Biden is expected to seek changes in the policy direction of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) which regulates interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite and cable in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories. The agency is also charged with expanding broadband in rural areas and leading the rollout of the fifth-generation wireless network 5G.

Although the FCC is an independent U.S. government agency overseen by Congress, the President appoints its members and chairperson, who must be confirmed by the U. S. Senate. President Biden is expected to appoint the most senior Democratic FCC commissioner, Jessica Rosenworcel, as interim head or the new head of the FCC. Given the Senate's recent confirmation of Republican FCC commissioner Nathan Simington, the agency will then be at a 2-2 deadlock with an equal number of commissioners from the two parties until the Senate approves another nominee.

If the Senate retains its Republican majority, the upper chamber may then end up blocking or delaying a vote on a Biden nominee to the FCC. If Senate control changes hands following the Georgia election in...
January, it will send a Democratic commissioner to the FCC, paving the way for an entirely different policy agenda for the nation’s broadband sector.

President Trump’s FCC took a light touch approach to governing the internet, benefiting large private sector service providers but drawing criticism for leaving consumers in the dust. A Democratic controlled FCC would be expected to reinstate the broadband internet as a public utility and to restore net neutrality that would require telecom giants to treat all internet traffic equally and would prevent them from partnering with publishers of content to provide faster speeds for their own apps than they do for other publishers’ apps.

A Democratic FCC would also be expected to grapple with the cost of internet services for distance learning and other applications and to provide grants to improve rural internet access.

**Congress Sends Trump A $2.3 Trillion Federal 2021 Appropriations and COVID 19 Package**

On December 21st, Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 which will provide $1.4 trillion in federal funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 and approximately $900 billion for COVID-19 relief from December 1st through March 31st. The 5,593-page package, the second-largest bill ever passed by Congress was signed on December 27th by President Trump, who also sent back a redlined version of the bill that incorporated changes he would like to see incorporated. The President’s signature avoided a federal government shutdown that Trump had threatened.

The Act includes all twelve annual appropriations bills for FY 2021 and a quarterly increment of COVID-19 assistance. Although the House of Representatives passed FY 2021 appropriations bills that included critical infrastructure funding earlier this year, this infrastructure funding was not included in the omnibus bill. The bill also does not contain direct COVID 19 assistance for state and local governments or liability protections for businesses. However, the bill extends the ability for state, local, and tribal governments to spend aid money provided under the CARES Act from December 31, 2020 through December 31, 2021.

Transit agencies and other transportation sector stakeholders will receive $13 billion in federal operating assistance through the Federal Transit Administration. The Federal New Starts transit capital program (Section 5309) would receive $2 billion compared to $49 billion in Federal Highway Administration funding.

The COVID-19 relief section of the bill includes: $10 billion for highways to support State Departments of Transportation and certain local transportation agencies; $1 billion to support AMTRAK; and $50 million and spending flexibility for paratransit providers. President-elect Biden indicated that he will pursue additional COVID-19 recovery and stimulus legislation which is likely to include a significant push to modernize U.S. infrastructure to create jobs and combat climate change.

**California Public Utility Commission Decides to Deploy Automated Vehicles**

The California Public Utilities Commission on November 19th voted to deploy an Automated Vehicles (AVs) Program after a successful pilot. California now joins Arizona and Illinois, as well as a number of other states and cities, in providing a green light for companies to operate AVs as taxis, or as ride-hailing vehicles summoned by smartphone apps.

But California’s AV regulatory program is distinctly Californian, in that the green light to industry comes with considerable regulatory oversight that reflects a compromise between cities, advocates, and companies. The recent decision:
• Lifts a previous ban on pooling – shared rides among separate parties – and on charging fares for rides.
• Requires companies to submit Passenger Safety Plans that will outline the steps the companies will take to provide accessible and equitable service.
• Requires companies to provide publicly available quarterly data reports that must include each AV trip’s time, date, census tract, and occupancy, total empty miles driven (where neither a driver nor a passenger is in the vehicle), as well as detailed information about the number of electric vehicles in the fleet and their charging behavior.

The CPUC denied the requests of cities for rules that would require local authorities to approve the operation of AV vehicles in their jurisdictions citing a fear that local approvals would, “create a patchwork of local regulations that could conflict with each other and complicate cross-municipality transport.”

CTC Issues Annual Report; Recommends More Money For Active Transportation Program
The California Transportation Commission released its annual report to the legislature in mid-December, describing $22 billion in transportation investments approved in 2020 for more than 1,200 projects. Due to stay-at-home orders, S. B. 1 gas tax revenues alone were down $1.9 billion from the typical annual revenue of $5 billion.

The annual report includes a call for the legislature to increase five-fold the amount of funding for the Active Transportation Program (ATP). Every cycle, the number and size of ATP project requests rise and exceed budgeted funds. Total annual funding for the ATP is about $220 million, with about $120 million from the State Highway Account and about $100 million from S.B. 1. The report notes that additional ATP funds could be allocated from cap-and-trade funds.

The report also recommends providing some relief for another S.B. 1-funded program, the Local Streets and Roads Program, which has required local jurisdictions to keep using local general funds at a consistent level to prevent new gas tax revenues to be substituted for local funds. COVID has been wreaking havoc with local funding, however, so staff recommends lawmakers consider some kind of temporary relaxation of that local commitment requirement.

The report also recommends further exploring a statewide per-mile road charge by testing VMT revenue collection methods. In 2017 the California Road Charge Pilot tested the concept of charging a per-mile fee to eventually replace the gas tax, revenue from which will inevitably shrink as cars become more efficient. That pilot focused mostly on the technology of how mileage could be recorded and accurately reported.

Region

L. A. City Launches Urban Air Mobility Initiative For Flying Cars, Neighborhood Airports
The City of Los Angeles on December 16th launched a one-year initiative, known as the Urban Air Mobility Partnership, to educate and engage the city’s residents about the introduction of low-noise, electric aircraft flying by 2023. A product of a public-private partnership between the Mayor’s Office, the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT), and Urban Movement Labs (UML), the effort will develop and implement a “vertiport,” a new piece of L.A. ’s transportation network where people can go to fly on an urban air mobility (UAM) electric, vertical-take-off-and landing (VTOL) aircraft – a flying car.
The one-year partnership will culminate in a policy toolkit that can be utilized and deployed to support urban air mobility. An Urban Air Mobility Fellow will be charged with advancing a comprehensive public engagement strategy around urban air mobility — how it will strengthen the economy, when L. A. might see vehicles take flight, and how it will impact and improve daily lives while providing a viable option for moving goods and people across the city.

Air Mobility Partnership comes on the heels of the publication of the “Principles of the Urban Sky,” a collaboration between Mayor Garcetti’s office, the World Economic Forum, and a group of 50 industry, not-for-profit, academic, and public sector stakeholders. The principles establish a joint commitment to safe, low-noise, and sustainable urban air mobility operations that prioritize equity of access, connections to transit, purpose-driven data sharing, and local workforce development.

The initiative is being financially supported by the Urban Air Mobility Division of Hyundai Motor Group.

L. A. Metro Launches Innovative MicroTransit Project
Micro is Metro’s introduced a new on-demand rideshare service on December 13th with two zones, one serving the LAX and Inglewood area on weekdays and the other serving Watts/Willowbrook seven days per week. The new service is for short trips and uses small vehicles (seating up to 10 customers). The initial fare is $1 per ride. The service is meant to be a fast, safe and convenient option for quick trips around town without having to transfer.

Trends

Private Sector Firms Team To Advance Electric Air Taxis
Santa-Cruz based Joby Aviation has raised almost $1 billion in venture capital and is the first company to receive air worthiness certification from the U.S military. With this certificate, the Joby Aviation eVTOL can now provide transportation of both personal and cargo for the U.S armed forces. This will give Joby the opportunity to further prove the safety and functionality of its electric aircraft, and make any necessary improvements before receiving FAA certification.

Joby Aviation has also acquired Uber Elevate, which is Uber’s initiative to make a network of on-demand air taxi transportation in major cities throughout the globe. Under the terms of the agreement, Uber as a company will remain a part of the partnership and the final overall product. The partnership will integrate both Uber’s ground transportation app and Joby’s air transportation app to provide a seamless travel experience for passengers. To grow this partnership, Uber has invested an additional $75 million in Joby Aviation, as well as a previously undisclosed $50 million made in January.

Traffic Thinned, L. A. Smog Grew In 2020
Los Angeles enjoyed a 21-day stretch of smog-free days at the beginning of 2020 that overlapped with the start of coronavirus stay-at-home orders, fueling hopes that dramatic cuts in driving would at least clean the air. No such luck. The year 2020 will instead go down as one of Southern California’s smoggiest in decades with the worst ozone pollution readings and highest number of bad air days since the mid-1990s.

In all, this year there were 157 bad air days for ozone pollution — the invisible, lung-searing gas in smog. The region has also had more than 30 bad air days for fine-particle pollution, or soot. Those numbers were boosted by a pall of smoke from wildfires up and down the West Coast.
Scientists are working to understand the influence of climate change, wildfires, vehicle emissions and lesser-known pollution sources such as the fumes released by disinfectants and other consumer products. They said the pandemic gave them an unparalleled natural experiment, showing what happens when you drastically curtail one source of pollution. What became evident is that decades of regulations have cut passenger vehicle emissions so dramatically that they are no longer California’s dominant source of smog-forming pollution.

The highest ozone pollution level recorded in downtown Los Angeles in 26 years — a reading of 185 parts per billion — occurred during a blistering heat wave on Sept. 6, the same day L.A. County exceeded 120 degrees for the first time on record.

Based on this year’s high smog readings alone, the South Coast air district said it will not be possible to meet the least stringent of those standards by a 2022 deadline.

**Santa Monica To Create Zero-Emission Delivery Zones**

Starting in early February 2021, Santa Monica will launch the Nation’s first zero-emissions delivery zone. Think robots delivering sandwiches, electric bicycles carting small packages, and plug-in three-wheeler dropping off pizzas.

Funded with a grant from the California Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development and coordinated through the Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator, the pilot program seeks to lower emissions and decrease traffic for food and parcel deliveries. The one-square-mile, zero-emissions delivery zone will be located in Santa Monica's Main Street shopping and dining hub.

**How Telework Might Transform L.A.**

Formerly bustling downtown office buildings and business districts have felt like ghost towns since the COVID-19 pandemic forced many to work remotely. A third of U.S. workers are still working from home, changing the rhythm of life in cities. The shift to remote work may continue long after the pandemic ends.

A recent University of Chicago study found that 37% of jobs in the U.S. can be done entirely from home. Tech companies like Twitter and Facebook have announced permanent teleworking options, while Nationwide Insurance, REI and others are closing office buildings in anticipation of new work patterns. More than 80% of office workers would like to work from home at least once a week after the pandemic, and nearly 90% of executives expect many or most of their employees will do so, according to a June survey by consulting firm PwC.

If a third of people work from home, overall time spent commuting in Los Angeles could drop 32%. Forty-four percent of employers say they feel their employees have been more productive working from home. However, teleworking’s long-range impact on networking, collaboration and other activities that benefit from face-to-face interaction is not yet known. If it ends up dampening productivity in the long run, it could shrink the economy and depress wages, potentially countering the benefits of lower home prices and less traffic.

Although predictions of the death of the office are premature, researchers at USC’s Marshall School of Business are considering whether a mass move toward remote work could transform American cities and affect housing prices, traffic and commute times, and where people choose to live. They developed a model to help understand what Los Angeles might look like if a third of employees worked from home and came to the following conclusions:
• The population in Los Angeles would spread slightly out from the core to the periphery as teleworking loosens the connection between where we live and where we work.
• Driven by financial concerns and lifestyle preferences, some new telecommuters would move from the urban core to the suburbs and beyond.
• City centers won’t hollow out since millennials and others drawn by amenities like restaurants and the arts may stay put even if they no longer have to, assuming these amenities spring back post-pandemic.
• As higher-paid teleworkers move away from central areas, home prices will drop in those locations, making it more affordable for others to move in — especially those who still need to come into the office. This could benefit low-income workers who have been pushed farther into the suburbs by gentrification and currently face grueling commutes.
• Urban neighborhoods may become more economically diverse. Gentrification won’t go away, but with less competition for real estate in the urban core, overall housing prices will likely drop citywide. Our analysis of movement within Los Angeles found that overall home prices could decline by around 6%.
• A handful of large cities, including Los Angeles and San Diego, could draw some of the now-untethered telecommuters attracted by the cities’ unique amenities. While home prices in most large cities will drop, costs in the most desirable urban areas may not fall much, because of an influx of new residents.
• As people move and real estate prices shift, businesses may also make different decisions about where to locate. And as people spread out, there may be fewer mixed commercial and residential districts that often define city living.
South Bay Measure R / Measure M Highway Programs

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