

<SBCCOG Letterhead>

Eric Garcetti, Chair  
L. A. County Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
One Gateway Plaza  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attn.: Joshua Schank  
L. A. Metro Chief Innovation Officer

Re: South Bay Cities Council of Governments Comments on  
Metro's Recovery Task Force Draft Final Recommendations

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