



File #:2016-0464, File Type:Informational Report

Agenda Number:48

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE JUNE 15, 2016

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE JUNE 16, 2016

SUBJECT: POTENTIAL BALLOT MEASURE PUBLIC INPUT AND POLLING RESULTS
ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE the Potential Ballot Measure Public Input and Polling Results.

ISSUE

The Metro Communications Team implemented a multi-faceted public outreach and input process across Los Angeles County to educate the public about the Potential Ballot Measure and get feedback on the proposed plan.

The public input process occurred through four main sectors of the community: Elected Officials Engagement, Key Stakeholder Engagement, Public Engagement, and Media Engagement.

Metro staff attended 84 stakeholder and community presentations and meetings, conducted numerous briefings with elected officials, held nine public meetings and one virtual online meeting, co-hosted two meetings with stakeholder partners, and conducted 14 telephone town hall meetings.

As another means of soliciting feedback, Metro also conducted a public opinion poll about the potential ballot measure to gage voter sentiment on a local sales tax measure to ease traffic and improve transportation. Staff collaborated with the professional polling firm FM3, which conducted the telephone survey May 21-June 1 in English and Spanish to 2,125 likely voters.

DISCUSSION

The public input process provided an opportunity for the public to submit their input through various ways - online comments, US Mail, voice mail, flip charts at the public meetings, comment cards, and social media. Metro received a total of 1,567 comments.

In addition, Metro received 91 letters from elected officials, city councils, key stakeholders, community groups, and business organizations. The comments were evaluated and compiled into

major themes that emerged. The major general feedback falls into the following topics:

- Build fewer projects, get them done faster
- Support 50-year sales tax so more projects could be built
- Increase Local Return
- Transit Connectivity: Support for Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC), Complete Streets, First/Last Mile, Green Streets, Active Transportation Projects
- Provide more funding for rail and bus; less for highways
- Provide more funding for highways
- Continue sales tax to keep the system in good working condition
- Increase quality and reliability of bus and rail service

There was substantial feedback about individual projects with the most prevalent comments about the following specific projects:

- **Orange Line:** Grade-separate, convert to LRT, connect to Burbank Airport and Gold Line
- **Sepulveda Pass:** Accelerate and connect Van Nuys LRT
- **Crenshaw North Extension:** Accelerate
- **Green Line Extension to Torrance:** Accelerate
- **West Santa Ana Branch:** Accelerate
- **Gold Line Eastside Extension:** Accelerate
- **First/Last Mile and Active Transportation:** Provide more Funding
- **Metrolink:** Service expansion/improvements
- **I-5 Widening between I-605/I-710:** Accelerate
- **SR-710:** Non-tunnel alternatives
- **Crenshaw Line:** Build Park Mesa Tunnel/Vermont Corridor

There were four other major themes that emerged: Rail, Bus, Streets and Highways, and Local Return.

Rail

- Build more rail lines faster
- Grade-separate lines
- Improve bus/rail connections
- Provide more parking at stations
- Upgrade BRT to LRT (Orange Line)
- Improve safety, amenities and maintenance at stations
- Provide better wayfinding signage
- Provide more money for Metrolink

Bus

- Increase bus service, especially to housing, employment and education centers
- Increase service to CSUN
- Provide more BRT lines to serve major transit corridors and connect to rail lines
- Improve the quality and reliability of bus service, especially in communities of color

-
- Improve safety, amenities and maintenance at stops
 - Improve wayfinding signage
 - Expand DASH and Express bus service
 - Utilize technology for improved bus/rail integration

Streets and Highways

- More HOV or Toll Lanes
- Fix potholes and sidewalks
- Improve streets for safer pedestrian use by seniors, children and the disabled
- Spend less money on highways and more money on transit
- State of Good Repair should apply to streets and highways as well as transit

Local Funding

- Increase Local Return to 25% for street repairs, Complete Streets, First/Last Mile and Active Transportation
- Do not increase Local Return
- Smaller, disadvantaged cities need their fair share of funding for transit services, street repairs and bicycle and pedestrian improvements
- Local Return funding formulas should be based on population, employment and housing growth
- Require cities to use part of funding for road maintenance

Public Meeting Outcome

A total of 563 people participated in the public meetings. During the meetings, Metro asked the meeting audiences a series of five questions and utilized an electronic polling system to get immediate responses from the groups. When asked if they would vote for the sales tax measure if the election were held at that time, an average of 73 percent said they would vote for the tax.

Telephone Town Hall Outcome

As another method to educate the public and get feedback on the plan, Metro hosted 14 telephone town hall meetings focused on different areas of the county. Collectively, 47,947 participated in the live telephone forums with Board members and Metro staff. During the live electronic polling, 68 percent registered their support for the sales tax measure.

Public Opinion Survey

The poll asked participants if they felt things in Los Angeles County were headed in the right direction or are off on the wrong track. Voters are more optimistic than they were in both 2008 during the Measure R vote and in 2012 when Measure J went to the ballot. Of the respondents, 47 percent said they believe the county is headed in the right direction compared to 19 percent in 2008 and 32 percent in 2012.

After educating the public about the transportation plan, 72 percent would vote for the “no sunset” ballot measure. Two-thirds of the voters are more likely to vote for the measure if it titled, the Los Angeles County Traffic Improvement Plan.

When asked about the plan's most important features, the benefits that resonate most with the public include:

- Keep fares affordable for seniors, students and the disabled
- Create jobs
- Repair potholes
- Earthquake-retrofit bridges
- Improve freeway traffic flow
- Sub-regional improvements and the need to provide transportation options for an aging population are reasons people would be more inclined to vote for the measure

The June 2016 survey vote pattern is similar to the June 2008 survey vote pattern - the last Metro public poll conducted before the November 2008 Election victory.

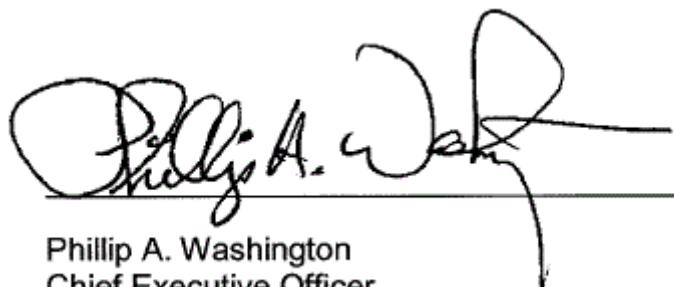
FINANCIAL IMPACT

No financial impact.

NEXT STEPS

All comments and feedback received through the public input process have been compiled into a binder and is available for viewing in the Board Secretary's Office. An electronic copy will also be available upon request.

Prepared by: Paulette Tonillas, Chief Communications Officer, (213) 922-3777



Phillip A. Washington
Chief Executive Officer