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Social Distancing on Our System

Many of you have asked why Metro hasn't deployed more buses so that we can provide more social distancing between riders – and between riders and our operators. We have discussed this with staff and labor leadership, but questions persist –and we absolutely owe you as complete an answer as possible.

Let's start first by acknowledging that your safety is our first priority. Which is why we continue to make sure that we are following public health orders and guidelines from the CDC and other health professionals. At this time, there is no direction for transit agencies to provide six feet of social distance although it is recommended to do so when practicable. That is what we've tried to do – provide enough service so that on average we don't exceed 75 percent of the seated capacity of our buses, which may mean some people are standing. That doesn't always translate to exactly six feet between every person, but we do think it avoids the heaviest crowding on most of our routes most of the time.

It is worth noting, too, that we're hardly the only transportation service grappling with this issue. The airlines are under no obligation to limit seating to provide for more distancing, and although some have chosen to do so, some do not. Metro would certainly like to see more consistent guidelines on this from federal agencies.

We've also required all riders to wear face coverings. We're still only boarding via the rear doors and the plexiglass barriers further help to isolate our operators. All three of those actions – plus frequent ventilation via the opening and closing of the bus doors – helps protect operators. In addition, operators are empowered to make decisions about pickups – and can forgo loading more passengers if operators believe their bus is too crowded.

We've also given riders more information about crowding via the Transit app – riders can now see whether their buses are expected to be crowded or not, meaning riders can make their own decisions on whether they want to board the next bus. It's a smart use of technology and helps us be transparent with our riders.

My approach from the onset of this pandemic has been clear – we're going to protect jobs by responsibly managing our finances.

It is no secret that the pandemic hurt this agency's finances. We could be facing a deficit of \$1.8 billion over the next two fiscal years. Putting out more service for fewer riders is cost-prohibitive and financially unsustainable. If we returned to our normal pre-pandemic service or even went beyond that, the funding to pay for that would have to come from somewhere. Without further help from the federal government, our options are virtually nonexistent.

As an Agency, we should take great pride in how we've managed our resources. We have adjusted service during the pandemic much less than many agencies across the U.S. and we've also managed to retain more of our ridership. We are one of very few agencies across the country that have not had *any* furloughs or layoffs. We plan to increase service gradually and commensurate with both ridership needs and financial capacity. Not doing it this way would almost certainly mean proportionate cuts to the workforce. That is our last, worst option — putting our people out on the street during a time of high unemployment and economic uncertainty.

In an ideal world, we could provide as much service as possible, keep our entire workforce and even issue extra pay. But that's not the world we currently live in. We've faced tough choices this year and we've tried our best to make choices that we think accomplish the most in terms of the safety of our employees and riders — while retaining jobs. On balance, we think we've accomplished that. We continue to wholeheartedly thank all of our frontline staff for their valor and professionalism during these difficult times.

Metro's 6th Annual Virtual Veterans Day Luncheon

On Friday, November 6, I joined Metro Board Chair and Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti and Chief Human Capital & Development Officer Joanne Peterson for the Sixth Annual

Veterans Day Luncheon to honor Metro employees and their families who have served and continue to serve in all branches of the United States Armed Forces. All Metro employees who are veterans or serving in the armed forces were invited to attend. The event, usually held at Union Station's Ticket Concourse, was a virtual event with lunch boxes offered at several bus and rail divisions and the Gateway meeting room at Metro headquarters.

The live broadcasted program, hosted by Dennis Tucker from Metro Veteran's Program, featured special performances to remember the fallen. Brigadier General Charles Edward McGee, one of the last living Tuskegee Airmen, was the guest of honor and was presented with a service award. Many thanks to Chief Human Capital & Development Officer Joanne Peterson, Veteran's Program Manager Dennis Tucker, Communications, ITS and all the Metro staff involved in making sure that this Veterans Luncheon tradition continued through these unusual times. On behalf of our agency, I deliver respect and gratitude to every one of my fellow veterans who have served, along with their spouses and children.

The recorded Veterans Luncheon event can be viewed, [here](#).



Community Conversations on November 17 with Tongva Leader Julia Bogany

In honor of National Native American Heritage Month, Community Relations, in partnership with Metro Arts and Design, invites you to a Community Conversations virtual program titled, "Our Journey to Visibility: Tongva Representation in Public Art". Join us Tuesday, November 17 at 12pm to dialogue with featured speaker Julia Bogany, a member of the Tongva Tribe. Julia will share how her collaboration with artists in LA County has increased the Tongva community's visibility in their homeland.

For over thirty years, Julia Bogany has worked for the American Indian community where she has consulted with many artists to develop public artwork that honors the history and traditions of the Tongva in Southern California. With Metro, Julia has consulted on many artworks including [Will Power Allegory](#) by Audrey Chan for the future Little Tokyo/Arts District Station and [Hands and Things](#) by Karl Haendel for the future Wilshire/Fairfax Station. To register for the conversation, please click [here](#).

Community Conversations is a virtual public program that aligns with Metro's commitment to diversity and inclusion as well as our efforts to listen and learn from LA County

communities. To learn more about Community Conversations, contact Michael Cortez at cortezmic@metro.net.



Antelope Valley Line Capacity and Service Improvements Program Scoping Meetings

Metro staff completed three virtual scoping meetings to receive feedback regarding the scope of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) that will be prepared for the [Antelope Valley Line Capacity and Service Improvements Program](#). The virtual scoping meetings attracted over 75 community stakeholders including representatives from the offices of LA Mayor Eric Garcetti, LA County Supervisor Kathryn Barger and LA City Council President Nury Martinez; the North County Transportation Coalition; and the cities of Lancaster, Santa Clarita, Palmdale, Acton and Glendale. Metro is accepting public comments on the scope of the DEIR through Monday, November 16, 2020, after which staff will take into account all public comments received in preparation for the DEIR anticipated to be released in Spring 2021.

The proposed project aims to improve service frequency and reliability along the 76.6-mile long Antelope Valley Line (AVL) commuter rail corridor between Lancaster and downtown Los Angeles to meet the mobility needs of residents, employees, and visitors throughout the region, including the Antelope and San Fernando Valleys. The primary project objectives are to: 1) enable up to 30-minute bi-directional passenger rail service to Santa Clarita Valley and up to 60-minute bi-directional service to Lancaster Station along the AVL corridor; 2) provide necessary supporting infrastructure improvements to increase capacity and enhance operational flexibility and service reliability along the AVL corridor; and 3) support the vision and goals for rail service in the region consistent with the [California State Rail Plan \(CSRP\)](#). This program is funded by Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) grant funds and Measure M North County subregional funds, which provide \$220.85 million dollars in funding.

To view recordings of the virtual scoping meetings, click [here](#). To learn more about the project and how to provide public comments on the scope of the DEIR, please click [here](#).

Procurement Postings

[L.A. Metro Emergency Food and Essential Goods Delivery Service \(RFP\)](#)

Metro will release a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit the L.A. Metro Emergency Food Essential Goods Delivery Service Program. The procurement process blackout period is expected to run from Friday, November 13, 2020 through Friday, January 15, 2021.

Metro will seek proposals from well-qualified firms to provide emergency food and essential goods delivery services that connects food bank distribution sites with low-income families within Los Angeles County.

Any inquiries concerning this procurement action during the blackout period must be directed to and may only be answered by Katricia Sabbath, Senior Manager Contract Administration at sabbathk@metro.net.

Construction Notices: Regional Connector, Purple Line Extension, I-5

Regional Connector Transit Project - Partial Street Closure Central Av

In place now, through mid-November 2020, is a partial closure of Central Av between 1st St and 2nd St to allow construction of the station's roof and street restoration as the Regional Connector Transit Project enters its last phase of at-grade construction. To view the notice of work click [here](#).

Purple Line Extension Project: K-Rail Work Zone at Wilshire Blvd./San Vicente Blvd.

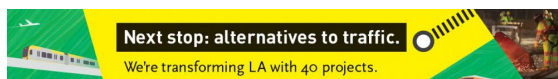
The K-Rail work zone within the center lanes of the Wilshire Blvd./San Vicente Blvd. intersection is anticipated to remain in place through December 2020. The enclosure will support ongoing tunnel and mitigation work underneath Wilshire Blvd. All left turns within the Wilshire Blvd./San Vicente Blvd. intersection will be closed while the K-Rail is in place. To view the notice of work click [here](#).

Caltrans Interstate 5: All Construction Updates [here](#).

"The two most powerful warriors are patience and time."

~ Leo Tolstoy

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