



Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

News

February 28, 2019

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Metro Board Approves Key Recommendations for Metro’s Bold “Re-Imagining of L.A. County” Transportation Initiative

In a significant vote to relieve traffic congestion and combat climate change, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) Board of Directors today voted to further explore congestion pricing and new mobility fees for ride share companies. Both are strategies in Metro’s “Re-Imagining of Los Angeles County: Mobility, Equity and the Environment” plan.

The Board also voted to continue work on the Twenty-Eight by ’28 Initiative, which seeks ways to fund the building of 28 major projects before the Olympic and Paralympic Games arrive in the Los Angeles area in 2028. Twenty of the projects are already scheduled to be complete by 2028 and \$26.2 billion in accelerated funding must be secured to build the other eight projects.

The Board also asked staff to “decouple” the Twenty-Eight by ’28 Initiative from congestion pricing and prioritize four of the eight transit projects to address the Twenty-Eight by ’28 acceleration funding needs: the Gold Line Eastside Extension Phase 2, The Green Line Extension to Torrance, the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project and the West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor Project, with this project being the first in the line for a public-private partnership. Metro staff will report back to the board with a financial forecast to deliver Twenty-Eight by ’28, including the prioritized projects, in May.

One of the “Reinventing L.A. County” initiatives approved for further study includes congestion pricing strategies, which use tolls to discourage too many motorists from adding to congestion, especially during peak periods. Metro will begin a 12- to 24-month congestion pricing feasibility study utilizing a Board-approved advisory council comprised of academia and other experts to determine a location where the concept can be tested and what type of congestion pricing would work best.

The three models to be studied are: a cordon model, where anyone traveling into a designated zone is charged a fee; a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Model, where charges are based on the number

of vehicle miles traveled within congested areas, and; a corridor model, where anyone traveling within a congested corridor is charged based on number of vehicle miles traveled within that corridor.

After the two-year feasibility study is completed and with future Metro Board approval, Metro could then begin a pilot program to test congestion pricing concepts.

Metro staff will also study whether congestion pricing could be used to pay for free and expanded transit going forward so that motorists have a fast, convenient alternative to driving. The study will also make equity for all road users a top priority. Metro, for example, will explore providing discounted tolls for low-income drivers, among other equity concepts.

Metro will also begin a feasibility study for pursuing fees on new mobility devices like electric scooters and ride share companies like Uber and Lyft that profit from the use of public roadways and whose vehicles contribute to congestion. Metro will study the effects of potential fees as well as pursue legislative authority from the state.

If both initiatives are subsequently approved by the Board, fees could be implemented in late 2020.

“It’s easy to say traffic can be fixed, but it’s harder to actually do it,” said L.A. County Supervisor and Metro Board Chair Sheila Kuehl. “We believe these initiatives can help manage traffic and encourage greater shared trips and use of public transit here in Los Angeles, the most congested city in the world.”

Metro’s original recommendations for strategies to build more projects quicker were requested by the Board last year to expedite the 28 projects. While working on this, Metro staff embraced broader strategies that would benefit the region before and for many decades after the Olympics and Paralympic games.

“By reinventing Los Angeles County through the lens of better mobility, equity and the environment, we have the potential to greatly reduce congestion, combat climate change by lowering our carbon footprint and significantly increase our transit frequency and capacity,” said Metro CEO Phillip A. Washington. “We are now thinking boldly to ensure our region can adequately meet its growing transportation demands in the decades to come.”

About Metro

Metro is a multimodal transportation agency that is really three companies in one: a major operator that transports about 1.4 million boarding passengers on an average weekday on a fleet of 2,200 clean air buses and six rail lines, a major construction agency that oversees many bus, rail, highway and other mobility related building projects, and the lead transportation planning and programming agency for

Los Angeles County. Overseeing one of the largest public works programs in America, Metro is changing the urban landscape of the Los Angeles region. Dozens of transit, highway and other mobility projects largely funded by Measure R are under construction or in the planning stages. These include five new rail lines, enhanced bus operations, and numerous highway and local projects.

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