

METRO MOVES CLOSER TO ZERO EMISSION BUSES (ZEB) FOR THE REGION

Tracy Smith October 14, 2024

Metro Board Approves \$49.84 million to purchase ZEBs, Related Infrastructure

LOS ANGELES (Oct. 14, 2024) – With the U.S. transit bus manufacturing industry in crisis, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) aims to provide relief to struggling original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) through its Regional Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) Procurement Policy. At its September board meeting, the Metro Board of Directors adopted a policy to bolster transit bus OEMs by requiring that all future bus procurements reduce customization requirements, introduce new and early milestone payments and encourage other local bus agencies to participate.

“This is the first time Metro is partnering with transit agencies across LA County to buy new buses together. It’s an opportunity to pool our purchasing power while also supporting zero emissions bus manufacturing jobs here in the US,” said Metro Board Chair and LA County Supervisor Janice Hahn. “This is the sort of creative approach we need to get all of our transit providers closer to zero emissions, clean air future.”

The Board also approved \$49.84 million in state Zero Emission Transit Capital Program (ZETCP) funds for Los Angeles County Municipal Operators Association (LACMOA) member agencies to purchase ZEBs and charging infrastructure through the regional procurement, the largest in U.S. history increasing competition and interest among U.S. bus manufacturers. The ZETCP will allocate \$320.6 million to Metro over four years for new ZEBs, charging infrastructure and facility modifications. Metro will distribute all four years of ZETCP funds to LACMOA member agencies in advance so that they can use the funds immediately.

“Metro is deeply appreciative for the leadership of the Biden-Harris Administration in addressing the crisis in zero emission bus manufacturing in the United States,” said Metro CEO Stephanie Wiggins. “Metro and more than two dozen local transit operators need to purchase thousands of Buy-America compliant electric buses over the next decade – but domestic manufacturing of these buses has not kept pace with demand. This coordinated approach between Metro and the Los Angeles County Municipal Operators Association (LACMOA) will support U.S. bus manufacturing and ensure that sufficient manufacturers remain in the market to meet California’s sustainability goals.”

On Feb. 7, 2024, Metro CEO Stephanie Wiggins was a speaker at a White House

Roundtable on Clean Bus Manufacturing that outlined specific steps transit agencies could take to bolster America's zero emission bus manufacturing capabilities. In addition to addressing reforms outlined at the White House Roundtable on Clean Bus Manufacturing, the Federal Transit Administration has taken decisive steps to deliver robust federal funding to expand Metro's fleet of zero emission buses. In August 2022, the Federal Transit Administration provided a \$104 million federal grant to Metro for the purchase and deployment of 160 battery-electric buses as well as for the procurement and installation of enroute and depot charging stations.

This federal funding is enabling Metro to support the transition to zero emission bus service on routes operating out of Metro's Divisions 9 (El Monte) and 18 (Carson) including the J Line (Silver) Bus Rapid Transit service. This grant is also funding related workforce development and training activities. In June of 2024, the Federal Transit Administration provided a \$77.5 million federal grant to Metro to help purchase dozens of zero emission buses, install new chargers, and expand workforce development training at Metro Bus Division 7 (West Hollywood). Metro is proud of its strong partnership with the White House and U.S. Department of Transportation in seeking creative and financially responsible solutions to address the crisis currently facing zero emission bus manufacturers in the United States.

Metro's allocation of Los Angeles County Regional Zero Emission Transit Capital Program (ZETCP) funds can be used to replace transit vehicles with zero emission, support associated fueling or charging infrastructure, facility modifications, and transit operations expenditures that demonstrate a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. The regional procurement will help accelerate our region's clean vehicle future as well as ensure our communities receive reliable transit service.

About Metro

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is building the most ambitious transportation infrastructure program in the United States and is working to greatly improve mobility through its Vision 2028 Plan. Metro is the lead transportation planning and funding agency for L.A. County and carries nearly a million boardings daily on four light rail and two subway lines and 119 bus lines utilizing more than 2,000 low-emission buses.

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