



Transportation Research Library and Archive Annual Report

July 2024

FY24

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority has significantly broadened its mobility agenda. During most of that period, Metro’s Transportation Research Library & Archive staff consisted of just two full-time librarians and one part-time as-needed librarian to fulfill the research needs of the organization.

However, the volume and diversity of information requests, the requirements of curating existing and new resources, and the accommodation of emerging technology and new media formats necessitated resource augmentation for the Library & Archive, and a new, permanent home within the agency.

Two years ago, the Library & Archive became part of the Office of Board Administration, alongside the records management and legal services units of Metro. As an essential component of the agency’s overall knowledge management function, we serve over 11,000 employees, as well as educators, students, journalists, transit advocacy organizations, historians and those who study mobility and the urban form from across the country and around the world.

FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

Since 2022, four additional full-time employees have joined the Library & Archive to meet these growing needs. FY2024 represents the first year of full staffing to meet these challenges, and we welcomed several new staff members: a digital resources librarian, a cataloging librarian, an archivist, a data librarian, and new graduate interns pursuing their Masters Degrees in Library and Information Science.

This report explains how our robust team is meeting our short-, medium-, and long-range goals as well as focusing on the thrust areas associated with the vision outlined in our Strategic Directions, FY2023 – FY2025 document. Increased staff and budget in the current fiscal year permits the Library & Archive to extend its reach and lay the foundation for meeting our information and knowledge management needs of the future.

As Metro continues to plan, construct and operate and refine transit for Los Angeles County, our team of information professionals will move forward in collecting, preserving and providing access to Metro’s universe of information assets. We are laying the groundwork to remain “future ready” to meet these and any challenges ahead.

Kenn Bicknell
Senior Manager, Policy Research & Library Services

ONE

OVERVIEW: YESTERDAY – TODAY – TOMORROW

YESTERDAY–TODAY–TOMORROW

The tagline for the Metro Transportation Research Library & Archive’s daily aggregated news product is: “The Past, Present and Future of Transit and Transportation in the Los Angeles region.” However, this all-encompassing focus extends beyond our digital newspaper product which disseminates critical information every workday. Our comprehensive approach to knowledge and information related to our agency’s mission informs our priorities and activities across our myriad products and services.

YESTERDAY

We curate historical material of lasting research significance. We collect, preserve, provide access to, and synthesize disparate historical resources to tell the stories of transit and transportation in Southern California. As a public agency, we surface and promote research assets to be used as freely as possible by our staff and external users. We work closely with our Records Management unit and Copy Center in the areas of digitization, weeding, records retention and records destruction in compliance with Metro policies. We celebrate our rich legacy by leveraging our archival assets via our Primary Resources pages and posts, FAQs, knowledge base entries, our This Date in Los Angeles Transportation History calendar, traditional and digital exhibits, a comprehensive digital asset management platform, and social media. We have begun plans to capture oral histories to complement traditional print and digital resources related to the region’s rich transit and transportation history.

YESTERDAY–TODAY–TOMORROW

TODAY

We collect interdisciplinary contemporary resources that support information needs related to Metro’s ambitious mobility agenda as well as transit and transportation in general. We support all Metro departments in their requests for information. The rapid growth in planning, constructing, and operating Metro projects over the last two decades has accelerated the need for both more resources and additional contextualization. We launch new collections to meet staff needs as we transition to more remote and hybrid work, such as e-books and engineering databases available via computer, tablet, or mobile phone. We promote our current assets via our online library catalog, our eBook collection, our online periodicals and our electronic databases. Additional sensitive and copyrighted material is collected, maintained and accessible via Metro’s SharePoint intranet site. These resources are complemented by our *Los Angeles Transportation Headlines*, a “bleeding edge” curated news digest disseminated every workday. All these resources are accessible via desktop or mobile device on a 24/7 basis, making us truly an “anytime, anywhere” library.

TOMORROW

We prepare for future needs now by actively engaging with peers and participating in appropriate professional organizations. We anticipate emerging technologies and best practices by pursuing continuing education as appropriate. We support the planning, activities and goals of Metro’s Board of Directors, Office of the CEO and departments across the entire agency. We continuously monitor new initiatives from around the organization, new Board priorities, developments within our partner organizations, and evolving plans for significant upcoming

YESTERDAY–TODAY–TOMORROW

events such as the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

We support our future (“tomorrow”) vision in several ways. We are actively engaged in aligning our activities with an eye toward succession planning, striving to become as “future-ready” as possible. We continuously re-evaluate how best to align our activities with Metro’s organizational values and the Office of Board Administration departmental strategic plan. We contribute to a more knowledgeable workforce via our *Los Angeles Transportation Headlines* and respond to requests for information. We save valuable time for both the staff and public by locating, aggregating and sharing disparate resources. We have created and continue to expand an innovative information-sharing landscape which allows us to cooperate and collaborate across Metro and with external partners.

TWO

PRIMARY GOALS OF THE LIBRARY

PRIMARY GOALS OF THE LIBRARY

In January 2023, we developed Strategic Directions, FY2023 – FY2025 as a general roadmap for the following three years. The roadmap outlined several short-, medium-, and long-term primary goals. The Library & Archive continue to make progress on these goals during the prescribed timeframe.

SHORT-TERM PRIMARY GOALS

GOAL	STATUS	EXPLANATION
Recommit to Metro's knowledge management potential through right sizing our role to provide essential products, tools, and services with four new FTE Library/Archive positions: Digital Resources Librarian, Librarian (Archivist), Librarian (Cataloging), and Librarian (Data).	COMPLETED	All four new FTE librarians on staff during this fiscal year.
Recruit, onboard, and train new professional staff to address collection, preservation and access to the universe of transit and transportation knowledge relevant for Metro's research and information needs.	COMPLETED	All four new FTE librarians are working independently across their respective job descriptions to fulfill the requirements of their classifications.

PRIMARY GOALS OF THE LIBRARY

MEDIUM-TERM PRIMARY GOALS

GOAL	STATUS	EXPLANATION
<p>Develop a strategic plan inclusive of short-term goals to meet long-term goals.</p>	<p>ONGOING</p>	<p>Regularly scheduled staff meetings and informal conversations to delineate responsibilities, surface division of labor considerations, establish priorities, and identify areas of collaboration for individual and collective FY2025 workplans.</p>
<p>Institutionalize how future strategic plans and annual reports will be generated and disseminated (e.g., frequency, audience).</p>	<p>ONGOING</p>	<p>This FY2024 annual report creates a frame of reference for future annual reports. Library & Archive staff will participate in crafting a FY2025 report, identifying essential elements explaining the nature of our myriad activities, and conveying their value and impact.</p>
<p>Using the 2018 Library user survey as a benchmark starting point, conceptualize a successor user survey to translate our reputation and standing into identifying priorities and more effective service.</p>	<p>SAVED FOR FY2025</p>	<p>N/A</p>

PRIMARY GOALS OF THE LIBRARY

MEDIUM-TERM PRIMARY GOALS cont.

GOAL	STATUS	EXPLANATION
Revise collection development policies for Library & Archive materials.	ONGOING	Staff is in the process of refining collection development parameters for nearly all media types in the Library & Archive collections. Electronic books, industry codes, born-digital documents, sensitive and copyrighted materials and other formats are being assessed for how comprehensively we collect in those areas, how they are cataloged, and where they are housed to provide maximum access. We will begin more formal collection development discussions and documentation of best practices in FY2025.
Provide input and considerations for any revisions to job classifications associated with onboarding new FTEs.	ONGOING	The Library & Archive Senior Manager and the Library, Archive and Records Management Director hold continuous discussions regarding staffing in conjunction with annual budget preparation as well as positioning the work unit to be “future ready.”

PRIMARY GOALS OF THE LIBRARY

LONG-TERM PRIMARY GOALS

GOAL	STATUS	EXPLANATION
Develop and initiate a data collection, preservation, governance, and access program.	SAVED FOR FY2025	Initial steps underway.
Develop and initiate an oral history collection, preservation, and access program.	SAVED FOR FY2025	Initial steps underway.
Work with the Board Clerk and Board Administration staff, as well as local peers and national transportation information professionals to further develop assessment and goals, along with associated metrics for success.	SAVED FOR FY2025	Staff will work with their peers across allied networks such as LA as Subject, Transportation Librarians Roundtable, and Special Library Association's Transportation Division.

THREE

FOCUS AREAS:

ALIGNMENT WITH
METRO'S AGENCY- WIDE
STRATEGIC PLAN &
OFFICE OF BOARD
ADMINISTRATION
DEPARTMENTAL
STRATEGIC PLAN

FOCUS AREAS...

I. DIVERSITY / EQUITY / INCLUSION

Library & Archive staff align their activities with Metro's focus on underrepresented stories and voices. We place an emphasis on surfacing and celebrating the stories of those who were not always included in historical documents and resources from the past.

Oral History Program: We preserve not only the memories and records of those involved in transit planning, construction and operations, but those behind the scenes and in support roles as well. Our archivist is in the initial phases of developing a complete oral history program. More information can be found in the Cultural Curation & Archival Management section.

Black History Month and Juneteenth: We partnered with the African American Employee Association to create an exhibit highlighting significant Black people and events in Los Angeles transit history. This collaboration highlights the long transit career of Bill Wells (1862–1943). He worked in local transit from 1891 to 1939 – beginning his career before automobiles existed and retiring just after the Pasadena Freeway's first segment was about to open.

Women's History Month: We worked with Metro's Women and Girls Governance Council to highlight the significant contributions of women to Los Angeles transit and transportation, including the history of early women streetcar conductors known as "motormanettes." During this process, we discovered that the WGGC was unaware that Metro had a Library on site, despite executing research related to Metro itself as part of its annual activities. The archivist plans to support the WGGC's future research needs and has applied to be a member of the FY2025 WGGC.

FOCUS AREAS...

Traqueros: We are researching and documenting the history of Mexican American railroad workers in the early 20th century, known as traqueros. This aggregated research constitutes an important part of our forthcoming online knowledge hub.

Where You Stand: Exhibit of Chinatown History: We are discussing programming opportunities with peers around this Union Station exhibit. We are working with Rare Books LA as well as the Autry Museum to uncover possible nexuses across organizations.

Library & Archive staff are proud of their legacy supporting the information and research needs of the Office of the Chief Executive Officer, their cabinet and staff, and the Metro Board of Directors.

II. SUPPORTING A KNOWLEDGEABLE WORKFORCE

The Library & Archive is strongly committed to Metro's workforce development. We collect, preserve, and provide access to resources that will help employees perform their job duties, pursue their professional development, and better understand myriad aspects of transit and transportation planning, construction and operations.

The Library & Archive performs the typical functions of a research center, responding to hundreds of research requests over the course of a year, and circulating hundreds of books, reports, and other print resources. Our online resources have been accessed thousands of times, and we seek more definitive metrics to refine our collection development policies going forward and to help demonstrate our return on investment.

FOCUS AREAS...

In August 2023, we revamped our marquee engagement tool, *Los Angeles Transportation Headlines*. This daily news aggregation platform is available to all employees and the public and keeps them apprised of what is happening across the region and around the world as it relates to Metro's robust mobility agenda. Launched in 2005, The Headlines was the first broadly disseminated transit agency news product of its kind in the United States. Nearly two decades later, it distributes approximately 10,000 curated news items per year to subscribers, and is available via email digest, mobile devices, and our website. For more information, please consult the spotlight on *Los Angeles Transportation Headlines*.

Library and Archive staff worked together to create bookmarks that will be shared with new hires at Metro New Employee Orientation and current employees during trainings and visits. Four different bookmarks were conceived, designed and produced. Each one highlights a different aspect of our resources and services. Until now, Metro's Library & Archive had not been a part of new employees' orientation. Subsequently, even some long-time employees were never made aware that the largest transit operator research library in the United States was part of their agency. The bookmarks contain QR codes that take the user to a webpage or online resource, making them an especially viable outreach tool for those employees who do not work in the Gateway Headquarters building.

During FY2024, we also assisted the SEED School and Metro's Labor/Vocational Center with research and consultation on digital displays of transit history. These projects ensure that new employees entering the profession are familiar with the historical legacy of transit and transportation in the region.

FOCUS AREAS...

Library and Archive employees toured all three new stations of the Regional Connector Project, which opened during the current fiscal year, and learned about Metro’s commitment to public art as part of its overall community engagement. We also delivered two engaging presentations about transit history to Metro’s “On The Move” program, an innovative community-focused initiative that teaches seniors how to use transit – and how to enlist other seniors to get on board as well.

II.I. PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Los Angeles Transportation Headlines daily digital news

product: One of the Library & Archive marquee services is the dissemination of aggregated news content, delivered to subscribers every workday. We have been collecting, assembling, and delivering news and information related to Metro’s ambitious mobility agenda since 2005. We were the first transportation library to do so, and nearly twenty years later, we continue to provide critical information to our employees and others “before they realize they need it.”

Our Headlines news digest has evolved over the past two decades. The way in which we collect information, the platforms and emailing services we use, and the subject matter we focus on have shifted as well. Unlike Metro’s internal communication products or collection of news “mentions” that serve as an online clippings service, our Headlines feature news stories from around Southern California as well as beyond. They focus on issues that are helpful to Metro employees and relate to Metro’s vision and mobility agenda, even though they may not pertain to the Los Angeles area. Our standardized subject areas include several topics that provide context for Metro employees, such as Politics & Funding, Sustainability, Technology and Research, Micromobility, and Equity/Justice.

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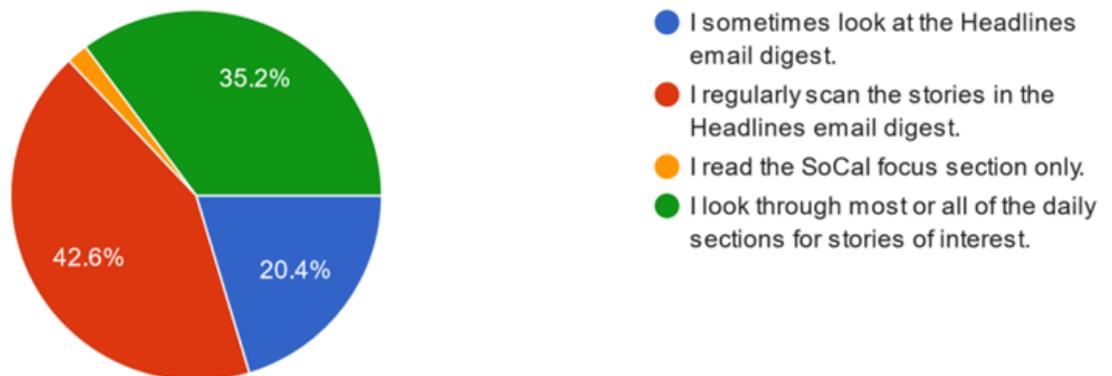
After ten years utilizing the paper.li digital newspaper platform, we were given three weeks' notice that the service would no longer be available, and we needed to search for an alternative. Library staff explored new options, assessed their viability, weighed their pros and cons, and eventually chose the UpContent platform to host the newest iteration of our Headlines.

We launched our WordPress-based news platform and emailed digest in August 2023. Early in 2024, we ask subscribers to take a brief survey about the new format and to offer comments about how they access the news and what they think about the content focus.

Approximately 10% of our 550 subscribers provided critical feedback and we are pleased to hear that we continue to provide a critical service that no other part of the agency delivers.

Which best describes how you use the Headlines? Select one response.

54 responses



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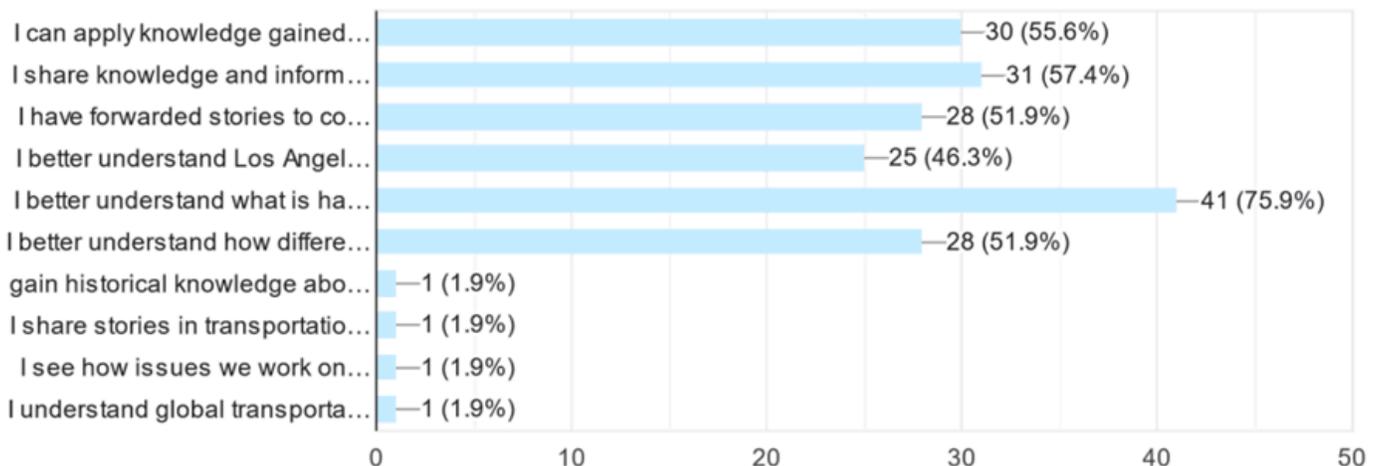
More than 77% of our subscribers report that they regularly (if not on a daily basis) scan or look through the stories in the daily email digest and the sections of the Headlines online.

A majority of respondents reported that they can apply knowledge acquired from subscribing to the Headlines, that they share knowledge and information gained from the Headlines, and that they have forwarded stories on to their peers and colleagues.

Additionally, more than 75 percent of subscribers report that they “better understand what is happening in Southern California regarding transportation and related subject areas,” thanks to their subscription to this unique Library & Archive service.

How have Headlines impacted you? Select all that apply.

54 responses



FOCUS AREAS...

The Path Forward: The Library & Archive remains committed to its daily news aggregation and dissemination. Subscriber feedback shows that we continue to provide a valuable service to both employees and external subscribers such as journalists, educators and students, transit advocacy organizations, and transportation enthusiasts. We will continue to revisit the collection, aggregation and dissemination processes to ensure that we are taking advantage of new technologies, and subject focus areas as warranted, and refine them as necessary.

FOCUS AREAS...

III. KNOWLEDGE CAPTURE

The Library & Archive recently hired a new cataloging librarian to tackle a backlog of uncatalogued material to be added to our collections. We are busy incorporating print books, studies, environmental impact reports, and harvested born-digital resources into our online catalog. We continue to include links to document PDF files that include metadata and optical character recognition (OCR) which allows for full-text searching. We are revisiting how we organize and manage our internal file directories that house these externally accessible resources.

We are preparing to execute a collection shelf reading and inventory project in FY2025. The goals of this project are to identify missing material, to provide more accurate shelving, to reconsider physical collection organization, and to accurately reflect which print materials have already been digitized and added to our digital library.

Library and Archive staff have begun a comprehensive review of our work unit's shared computer drive as well as our externally-accessible web drive. This is a major clean up project that will consolidate file directories, move resources to their appropriate storage area, eliminate out of date or superseded information, and accommodate sensitive materials such as copyrighted or staff-only resources.

We continue to aggressively identify, collect, preserve, catalog and provide access to born-digital content that would not otherwise be acquired in the same procurement channels as print books and documents. White papers, research articles, and "gray literature" from University Transportation Centers, transit advocacy organizations, and

FOCUS AREAS...

other transit and government agencies that fit our collection profile are harvested and ingested into the library catalog. This year, our graduate student interns were instrumental in reducing the backlog of cataloging and ingesting this material.

Our new internal policies include cataloging intake forms to streamline these processes. We launched an Asana web and mobile work management platform to organize workflows and document tasks across our shared responsibilities. We have also developed methods to document completed research requests which will inform a clearer picture of how we are assisting users.

These efforts build upon our past collection of previously answered reference questions. We have saved more than a decade's worth of emailed query responses in hopes of leveraging that accumulated information as the basis of an online knowledge base. With new professional staff on board, we can begin building a powerful wiki tool that users can consult prior to submitting a new request for assistance. Our Primary Resources website will debut in Summer, 2024 and the knowledge base and FAQ will follow shortly thereafter. For more information on the website, please see the Spotlight on Library & Archive Website Redesign section.

We have also made great strides this year in capturing additional knowledge to share with our users. We have identified, acquired, and promoted new electronic databases related to engineering and industry codes. We have reevaluated our print serials collection to determine where we can cost effectively substitute electronic resources in their place. We have synthesized various assets into new high-value resources such as a comprehensive list of Metro-era environmental impact reports. We have also aggregated new

FOCUS AREAS...

data resources into a robust list of places to find data related to transit and transportation.

We have begun departmental outreach to key Metro work units, highlighting specific resources and research tools that are most applicable to their endeavors. In the coming year, we will be exploring options for screencast tutorials to be mounted on our Primary Resources site that instruct users how to execute various types of transit and transportation research. We will continue to refine our outreach and drop-in instruction efforts with an eye toward strategic learning objectives and staff feedback.

III.I. PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Library & Archive Website Redesign: As the Library & Archive has evolved over the last decade, so has the need for its Primary Resources website to support the growing and diversifying information needs of the agency. Now that the professional staff has tripled and new initiatives are underway, we have been able to reconsider what type of web presence and user experience we wish to create, and what we will be able to sustain going forward.

Our Primary Resources website was originally conceived as a blog that would share some staff-generated research along with a calendar of significant dates, milestones, and anniversaries in regional transit and transportation history. The calendar was born out of the need to bring together previous in-house analog tools that substantiated exact dates. After we began systematically digitizing the most important and highly consulted resources in our collection, links to the full-text documents, photos, film, maps, and other digital resources were integrated into the calendar as well.

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However, Primary Resources must now serve as a robust, multifaceted web presence beyond a blog. It has to leverage integration of our disparate collections with powerful search tools that allow users to more easily find resources and answers. It must transition from a blog to a contemporary departmental website. This requires eliminating outdated information, evergreening date-specific information from the past that has lasting research significance in the future, creating a more uniform look and feel across all our online platforms, and taking advantage of our common mission with the records management function of Metro while accentuating our shared roles within the Office of Board Administration.

Our re-envisioned and completely overhauled website will debut in Summer, 2024. Users can now launch their research by consulting a primer on core transportation resources. They can easily tap into myriad data collections. They can execute searches within Metro's digital and digitized assets. They can now easily connect to the Metro Board Archive, strengthening the connection between work units within the Office of Board Administration.

The Path Forward: We will continue to add new features to our web presence to further solidify our commitment to being a "24/7, anytime, anywhere" center for transit and transportation knowledge and research. We will be building out our knowledge base collection of core information and an associated "frequently asked questions" (FAQ) section where users can look for information related to queries that have already been asked and answered. We will also be incorporating our oral history program as that initiative progresses in the new fiscal year and beyond.

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IV. COLLABORATION

IV.I PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

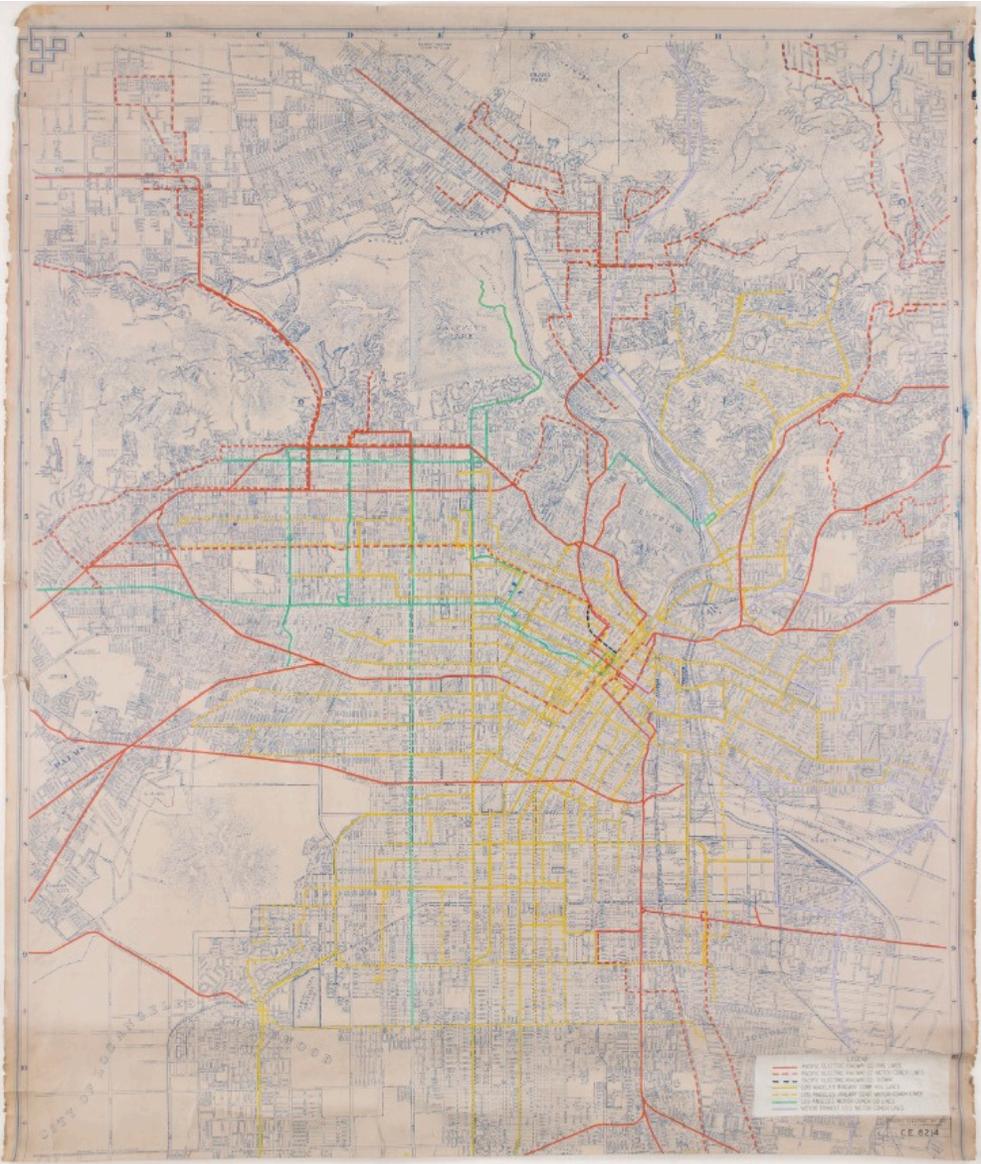
Whitlock Map Digitization Project: The Library & Archive partnered with the Getty Research Institute to perform a comprehensive preservation assessment and digitization of one of our most prominent and valuable assets. Our 51 x 62-inch framed “Whitlock” map has lived on a hallway wall outside the library’s entrance for years, but time has taken a toll on this unique resource.

The map was designed in 1927 by Laura L. Whitlock, a female cartographer dubbed “The official map maker of Los Angeles County” by *Sunset* magazine in 1918. It contains numerous stories about Los Angeles from nearly one hundred years ago. The city (along with automobile ownership) was undergoing rapid expansion, and regularly scheduled bus service had just been launched in 1923 as a joint venture of Los Angeles Railways and Pacific Electric Railway. The map features many familiar streets and sites, along with rail lines and the newly created bus routes.

Library & Archive staff worked with Getty Digital Imagine to not only explore preservation options, but to scan the map so that we could have a digital surrogate for future uses. While the map was on site, Getty staff requested to create a special 3D scan using advanced technology. They used a structured light scanner to record the spatial geometry of the map’s surface with submillimeter point accuracy of 0.2 mm. They applied high-resolution 2D tiles in combination with the structured light scan to create the final product: a 3D model with highly accurate geometry and a very detailed 16K Image texture. This data can be used for condition monitoring, augmented, virtual and extended reality outputs, and digital storytelling platforms.

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The Path Forward: With the map's 100th anniversary and the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Summer Games coming up, the map can serve as a platform for data layering applications, posting site-specific images, collaborative initiatives with other libraries, archives or museums, and a look back at Los Angeles just prior to its inaugural hosting of the 1932 Summer Games.



FOCUS AREAS...

V. SUCCESSION PLANNING

As mentioned, the Library & Archive staff has tripled, and the current fiscal year saw six professional FTE with Masters Degrees in Library and Information Science, along with an additional part-time professional librarian and two graduate student interns from UCLA pursuing the same degree.

Library & Archive management remain firmly committed to succession planning and a smooth transition for leadership in the coming years. The new librarians have distinctly individualized responsibilities, yet there is considerable overlap of interests and roles across their work. The team has demonstrated cooperation, collaboration, cross-training, and initiative to make the most of their shared passion for the Library & Archive, its mission, and helping the Office of Board Administration move the knowledge management function of the agency forward.

We have begun codifying standard operating procedures to ensure consistent and clear documentation for ongoing tasks. We have all identified professional development and continuing education opportunities to build upon our existing strengths and skills.

We have pursued closer alignment with others in the Office of Board Administration, working with records management around issues of retention schedules and materials destruction. We have worked with electronic records management staff to learn how we can apply their taxonomy protocols to our own work as we plan for resource integration tools across work areas, such as a federated search platform. As an example, this information may inform how we apply standardized vocabularies, metadata and local subject headings in our Preservica digital asset management tool.

FOCUS AREAS...

We will map out the division of labor and workflow for new projects in the coming year, such as a comprehensive collection development policy and subsequent annual reports. We have already begun discussions regarding what we would like in a next-generation integrated library system (ILS) when we decide to migrate to a more powerful library catalog and collection administration tool.

We take a broad view of succession planning by supporting graduate students in our profession. We have engaged with graduate student volunteers to provide them the opportunity to create archival finding aids, and we will continue to find ways to celebrate our successes, demonstrate our value, cultivate leadership, and remain “future ready” for emerging technologies, new media formats, and a shifting resource landscape.

VI. COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH SUPPORT

This year, Metro Library & Archive welcomed its first data librarian to lead efforts to identify, collect, preserve, and provide access to Metro’s myriad data assets. This work has already resulted in several valuable new resources and collaborative endeavors.

We have created an updated and comprehensive resource for past Metro environmental impact reports (EIRs) – now available via the SharePoint intranet and Metro’s Primary Resources website – which feature contemporary and past terminology to increase relevance and usability.

We completed and shared documentation for a 2024-2025 data curation program overview, created a data curation and data collection policy, coordinated a data collection project alongside one of our graduate interns, oversaw the gathering

FOCUS AREAS...

and sharing of numerous APTA resources for internal-only access, new lists of data resources are being curated for internal Metro users via the SharePoint intranet, as well as via the Library's website for external researchers.

Our cooperation and collaboration around data curation includes several new initiatives. We outlined initial documentation for a data curation workflow. We worked with other Metro staff associated with data and technology to bring forward issues of mutual responsibility and interest.

This includes networking with collaborators across Metro to understand existing systems (ArcGIS Platform, GIS Data Portal, Metro Web Development, PowerBI, Oracle, RIITS, Semaphore Taxonomy Database, Ridership Survey) and the overarching data landscape within the agency.

Externally, we co-led all Spring, 2024 sessions for the National Transportation Knowledge Network's Data Curation Community of Practice (NTKN DCCP), in addition to presenting and leading discussion on data literacy, data governance, and transportation libraries for the NTKN DCCP.

We have already redesigned our entire web presence, and will be launching our new site during Summer, 2024. This involved not just a new layout and additional content. It involved incorporation of countless new technical requirements, as well as a comprehensive redesign and considerations for how additional content will be ingested, rendered and managed going forward.

The Library has developed and deployed a reference tracking tool to help staff document reference queries along with the status of resources consulted in responding to complex

FOCUS AREAS...

requests, especially when involving more than one staff member.

Library & Archive staff have participated in the development of federated search, testing prototype models put forward as a solution as a comprehensive search platform to be utilized by staff in the future.

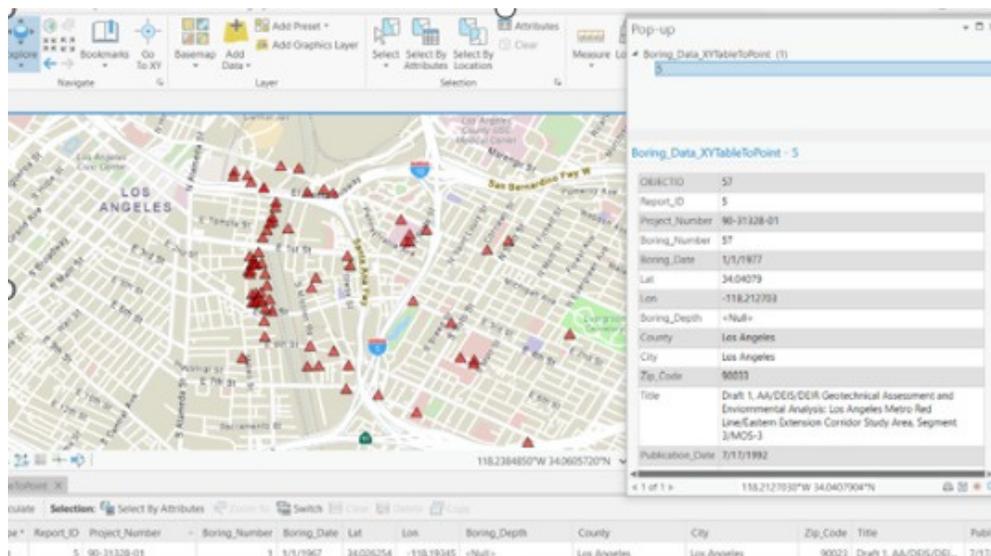
We have also initiated a comprehensive review of our shared computer drives and our externally-accessible computer drives to increase consistency and share understanding of what is housed where, and why. This work has driven conversations around planning needs for various platforms, preservation and future migration precautions, database cleanup, and considerations for how best to provide restricted access to employees for copyrighted, sensitive, embargoed, and unsolicited proposal materials.

VI.I PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Geotechnical Mapping Project: This year, we launched an innovative project to map the agency's historical geotechnical studies using GIS. This involves pulling locational data found within Metro's geotechnical studies (usually from drilling/boring locations) to create an online map showing the history of the agency's geotechnical work throughout Los Angeles County.

This "geotechnical studies map" will improve reference services and help the Library better answer spatial inquiry reference questions, improve access to and discoverability of Metro's historical geotechnical knowledge, and better meet the information-seeking behaviors of Metro researchers and engineers.

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Once completed, the map will enable researchers and engineers to find all geotechnical studies that were performed in a particular area (e.g. MacArthur Park). By clicking on a point within the map (ie, a drilling/boring site), the researcher will then see information about which geotechnical study was performed at that location, when, and by whom. Other data will include job and contract numbers, drilling depth, and a public link to the online report hosted in our digital library.

The path forward: This project has opened new avenues of potential collaboration between the Library and Metro's GIS unit. The Library met with staff from Metro's GIS work group to discuss the project and its potential applications. As we get closer to mapping all data points, we will work more closely with the GIS unit to ensure quality control of data and that we are applying best practices and standards for the preservation of geospatial data going forward.

The map will eventually be hosted on Metro's ArcOnline account (managed by the GIS unit) where it will be publicly accessible online with a persistent and stable URL.

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VII. CULTURAL CURATION AND ARCHIVAL MANAGEMENT

We partnered with the Los Angeles Public Library map librarian for an Instagram-based “Map Off.” This event consisted of a series of social media posts celebrating highlights from each institution’s map collections.

Development of Metro’s Oral History Program is underway. We have coordinated and held meetings with several colleagues to network with and gain insight from other oral history professionals. These include: the Oral History program at UCLA; the California State Archive; the Oral History Center at UC Berkeley Bancroft Library; and Los Angeles Public Library’s Central Library.

These conversations provided us with recommendations for helpful tools and protocols to initiate a program. We acquired knowledge of Oral History Metadata Synchronizer (OHMS), the Aviary online oral history sharing platform, formal paperwork related to obtaining permissions and rights from oral history interviewees, and the principles and best practices for forming an oral history advisory committee. We also researched and acquired industry standard recording equipment recommended by oral history professionals.

We are moving forward with identifying priority candidates for oral history interviews and collaborating with the records management team to build a shared understanding of how select records will be transferred to and retained in the archive.

FOCUS AREAS...

Library & Archive staff had a busy year establishing and building peer relationships related to cultural curation and our archive.

We visited the archive of the Automobile Club of Southern California to learn more about the ACSC collections and services, and we look forward to future collaboration where possible. The USC Digital Library hosted Metro Library & Archive staff for an extensive overview of their digitization processes and workflow. Plans are underway for professionals from both institutions to visit us as well. In the coming year, we anticipate visiting our library and archive peers at the Los Angeles City Archive and Records Center, the LA84 Foundation, the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences.

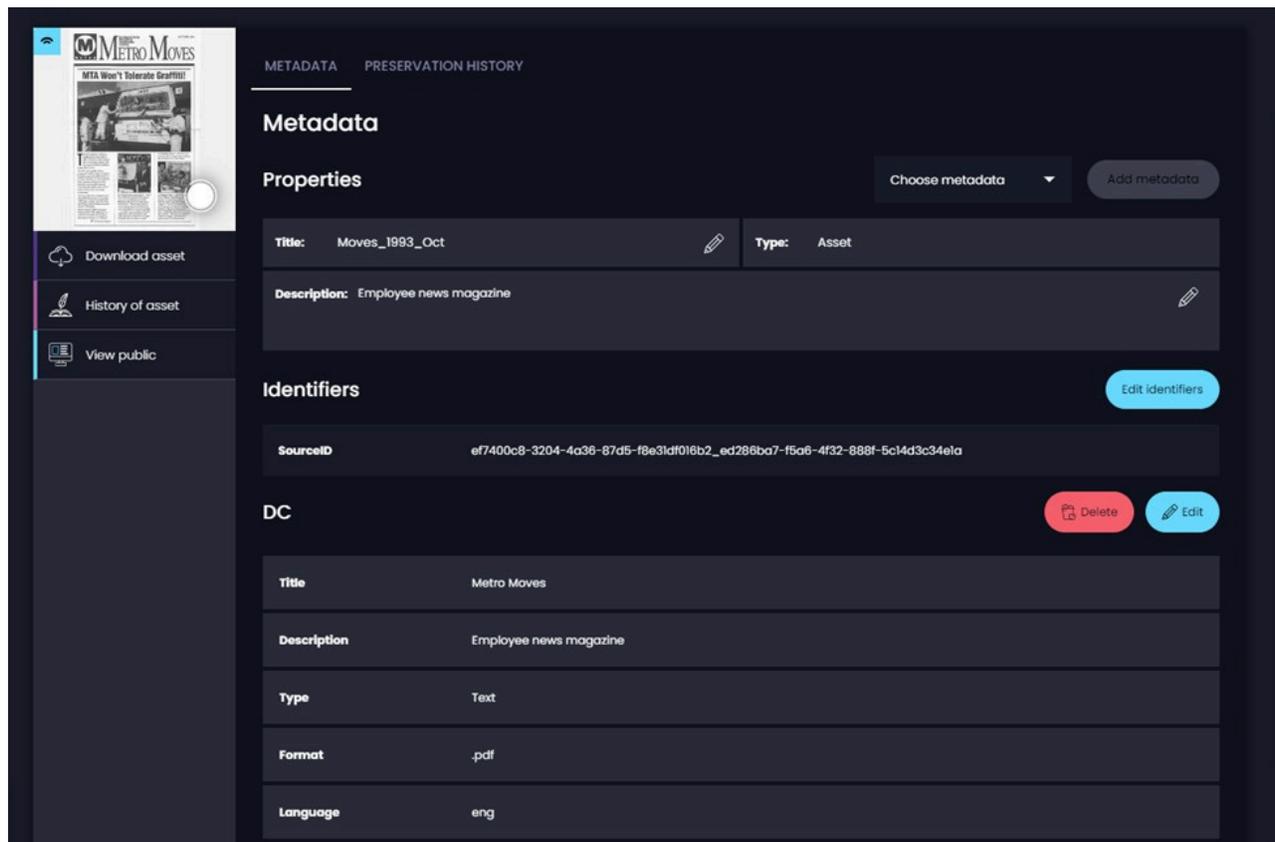
VII.I PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Digital Asset Management: The primary objective of our archive is to collect, preserve, share and promote the rich historical legacy of public transit and transportation in the Los Angeles region. We are actively engaged in protecting the digitized collections and born-digital records that document the history and “history in the making” of Metro and its predecessor agencies.

To meet this objective, we have launched implementation of Preservica, an active digital preservation software platform which stabilizes digital assets, removes them from risk of technological incompatibility and digital obsolescence in the future, and sustains every file in future-friendly, retrievable formats.

FOCUS AREAS...

We worked closely with the support team at Preservica to customize ingestion methods of digital files to an FTP transfer protocol, an OPEX incremental workflow and eventually a new NDI interface to assist with seamless uploading of large, structured files.



FOCUS AREAS...

In conjunction, we acquired ArchivesSpace, an archival collection management tool to assist with organizing and managing metadata relating to archival collections and accessions. We also worked with ArchivesSpace and Preservica support teams to gain access to API protocols that allow for linking the two platforms in order for metadata of physical archival collections to be shared to their digital components and counterparts. This involved additional coordination with Preservica to bring online specific workflows of creating digital objects in ArchivesSpace and uploading metadata templates to Preservica in order to receive the crosswalked data.

We also met with and learned from several librarians already working in the Preservica digital ecosystem, including those at Yale University Library, the University of Texas at Arlington Libraries, and Multnomah County (OR) Records and Archives.

We digitized the entirety of the Blue and White Bus Company of Watts archival collection (45-DPGTL) as a case study collection. Using this small, but fully processed collection, we were able to apply all workflows to this set of archival material to test the system architecture.

At the end of FY2024, there are currently about 2,000 digital files in Preservica, consisting of 22,000 MB. As we continue to digitize Metro's institutional heritage and that of its predecessors, our Preservica holdings will grow exponentially.

FOCUS AREAS...

The Path Forward: As we move towards using Preservica as our primary digital asset management system, we intend to leverage various analytic tools to better understand our audience as well as what kinds of archival materials and topics are of most interest.

This information will allow our team to develop intentional digitization and description pipelines, finding a balance between known materials that are of high external interest and lesser-known materials that are of a high historical importance.

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVE: BY THE NUMBERS

TOTAL UNIQUE TITLES	36,149
TOTAL COPIES	41,155
TOTAL ITEMS IN CATALOG	44,504
FY24 BOOK CIRCULATION	131
DIGITAL RESOURCE ACCESS VIA CATALOG URLs	863
ARCHIVE'S TOTAL LINEAR FEET	880
TOTAL IMAGES ON FLICKR	14,899
FY24 FLICKR VIEWS	1,374,586
TOTAL VIDEOS IN YOUTUBE	218
FY24 YOUTUBE VIEWS	248,474

FOUR

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

The Library & Archive enters FY2025 ready to meet the information needs of Metro and its external users. The staff continues to work, learn and grow within our respective roles while assessing opportunities for cooperation and collaboration amongst ourselves and others.

We demonstrate appropriate stewardship of our assets of lasting research and historical significance and value the responsibility placed in us to provide return on investment for additional staffing and augmented resources. We will continue to work with Metro employees from across the agency as well as our peers and partners in libraries, archives, museums, academia, and other governmental agencies.

We are closely following developments regarding Metro's ambitious mobility agenda, expansion of our bus and rail network, preparations for California High-Speed Rail and its impact on the region, plans for Union Station and regional transit-oriented development, the evolution of micromobilities and fareless transit in Los Angeles County, and preparations for international events held in Los Angeles in the coming years.

The Los Angeles County region is complex in size and scope. The transportation sector is both a niche field and incredibly interdisciplinary in its makeup. But we are laying the groundwork now to meet the challenges of both today and tomorrow head on, in a spirit of teamwork, public service, and responsible stewardship of public funds and trust.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following staff members have worked tirelessly on the various projects and initiatives mentioned within this report:

Nicholas Auricchio, Librarian

Sidney Garcia, Graduate Intern

Ariel Hahn, Librarian (Data)

Claire Kennedy, Librarian (Archivist)

Alanna Marcelletti, Librarian (Cataloging)

Abby Mortimer, Graduate Intern

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