



Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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May 31, 2016

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THROUGH: PHILLIP A. WASHINGTON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER *PAW*

FROM: PAULETTA TONILAS
CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER *P.T.*

SUBJECT: EVALUATION OF EXPANDING METRO CUSTOMER CENTERS

ISSUE

This is an update to inform the Metro Board of Directors of staff's efforts at exploring ways to expand Metro customer services across Los Angeles County. The purpose would be to enhance how the agency provides fare media sales, TAP Reduced Fare Application intake and other transportation services to transit customers within the underserved areas of LA County.

DISCUSSION

This report is in response to Board Motion #2016-0174 offered by Directors Paul Krekorian, Sheila Kuehl and Mike Antonovich to explore starting a Metro Customer Center in the San Fernando Valley, and an amendment by Director Jackie Dupont-Walker to get an update on the proposed Mobile Customer Center regarding a request from the City of Los Angeles Mayor's Office for Metro to research options to implement a mobile customer center. Metro Customer Programs and Services has been taking a broad look at how to expand customer services across the county as a whole. The focus is on providing better customer service access to the various underserved areas of Los Angeles County.

Currently, there are four stand-alone Metro Customer Centers which service the entire Los Angeles County; 1) Union station/Gateway Plaza, 2) East Los Angeles, 3) Baldwin Hills/ Crenshaw and 4) Wilshire/ Vermont. In the past, Metro operated additional customer centers across the county, but they were closed due to budget constraints.

The four current Customer Centers provide full service transit options which include; issuance of temporary TAP Reduced Fare Cards, intake of TAP Reduced Fare applications from seniors, disabled and students and TAP fare media sales.

Collectively, the four Metro Customer Centers provide service to approximately 600,000 customers annually.

However, there are several areas within Los Angeles County that remain underserved. These populations have limited or no access to purchase TAP fare media or other transit services conveniently.

The general cost to establish a Metro Customer Center is about \$1 million for the first year. The build out and tenant finish of a leased office location including furniture and equipment is about \$400,000. The monthly lease payments would be approximately \$7,777 based on the current lease of the new Wilshire/Vermont Customer Center. The cost to staff the center for a year with four full-time staff members would be about \$450,000 a year. To open a Metro Customer Center in the various underserved areas of the county, the cost would be approximately \$1 million per center.

One way to provide a more timely and cost effective way to expand customer service across the county is through a Pilot Metro Mobile Customer Center.

After much consideration, staff believes establishing a Pilot Mobile Customer Center would provide a more immediate strategy to expand customer service across the county. This would allow Metro to provide easy access to our customers within the underserved areas of each County Supervisorial District by moving the mobile customer center around the county.

The Metro Mobile Customer Center would provide fare media sales and Reduced Fare application intake assistance at local senior centers, schools and other special community event.

NEXT STEPS

Metro staff is fully developing the concept of a Pilot Mobile Customer Center and working collectively with Community Relations and TAP Operations to identify underserved areas within Los Angeles County and opportunities to serve large groups of people at one location. A rotation schedule would be developed to move the mobile center around the county to local senior centers, schools and community events.

Customer Programs and Services would utilize one of its existing vans and equip it with the items needed to provide fare media sales and assistance with processing TAP Reduced Fare applications. The van would be wrapped to brand it as a mobile customer center.

Staff proposes implementing the Pilot Mobile Customer Center program in phases with the target implementation timeline for the first phase to occur in the first quarter of FY17. Staff could begin this operation in July 2016 by visiting senior centers in each of the County Supervisorial Districts. The program would then expand by visiting schools and community events and festivals in underserved areas.

Metro staff will report back to the Board of Directors to provide updates on the progress of the Pilot Mobile Customer Center.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Metro Board Motion #2016-0174



Board Report

File #:2016-0174, File Type:Motion / Motion
Response

Agenda Number:61.

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING
FEBRUARY 25, 2016**

Motion by:

Directors Krekorian, Kuehl and Antonovich

February 25, 2016

Customer Service Center

The San Fernando Valley is home to almost two million residents. The Valley is home to the Metro Orange Line, the most popular fixed-guideway BRT in North America, as well as the terminus of the Red Line and scores of Rapid and Local bus lines that traverse its 260 square miles. Yet, the Valley does not have a Metro customer service center to serve what amounts to almost 20% of the county's population.

Valley customers currently need to travel to Union Station, East Los Angeles, or South and Southeastern areas of the county to reach a service center. Requiring the transit-dependent to travel such a distance conduct business and receive services from Metro is unacceptable. It should not be so burdensome for a Valley resident to conduct TAP business, particularly for students or members of the disability community.

APPROVE Motion by Krekorian, Kuehl and Antonovich that the MTA Board instruct staff to investigate the steps necessary to create a conveniently located Customer Service center in the San Fernando Valley and report back on that and the timeline to do so.

AMENDMENT BY DUPONT-WALKER to include in the report back information on the **Mobile Customer Service Center**.