



Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

213.922.2000 Tel
metro.net

Metro

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TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FROM: PHILLIP A. WASHINGTON PAW
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

SUBJECT: WEEKLY UPDATE ON RESPONSE TO COVID-19

ISSUE

This memo is the weekly update to the Board, for the Week of March 23, on Metro's actions responding to COVID-19.

BACKGROUND

Due to the everchanging crisis regarding COVID-19, staff will issue weekly updates to the Metro Board of Directors on the latest actions to respond to federal, state, and local directives during this national emergency.

DISCUSSION

Metro's Incident Management Team (IMT), in coordination with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and several departments, continues to respond to public health and safety updates and intelligence briefs, deploy best practices in emergency management, communicate and share information with City, County, State and Federal partners, and plan for needs related to logistics/supplies for staff, such as gloves and masks, the impact of ridership reductions, the financial analysis associated with grant reimbursement opportunities and other emergency response activities. This Incident Command Structure (ICS) will remain activated during the continued declarations of emergencies and is linked to the EOC on a 24-hour basis for any emergency updates. Metro staff receives regular updates and guidance on how to respond to cases of positive tests for COVID-19 and to take prescriptive actions related to quarantine directives from LA County Public Health.

Operations

As of Wednesday, March 25, bus and rail ridership continue to decrease (approximately 70-80%) due to continued school closures, restaurants, bars, and entertainment venue closures, and increased recommendations for social distancing, isolation and quarantine directives related to COVID-19. We are experiencing many staff call outs due to childcare needs or being at higher risk for COVID-19. The reduced availability of workforce has resulted in a reduction in service levels by 20%. The table below describes the number of workers that are out as a direct result of COVID-19 during this crisis, illustrating some of the challenges we face in providing service out on the street. The table does not account for other types of leave, such as vacations, Family Medical Leave Act, etc.

Metro Employees Using COV Code – *this is the leave code used for COVID-19 related absences (i.e. childcare, recommended quarantine)*

Employee Affiliation	Employee Count - Coded COV	No. of Hours	\$ Amount	Total Agencywide Employees	Percentage by Affiliation Using COV Code
AFSCME	33	771.00	36,160.19	840	3.93%
ATU	288	5,379.98	209,822.40	2,574	11.19%
SMART	443	7,372.62	186,528.09	4,948	8.95%
TCU	115	2,651.93	82,528.73	981	11.72%
TEAMSTERS	4	88.00	2,336.24	152	2.63%
NON-CONTRACT	58	1,128.00	54,440.32	1,833	3.16%
Total	941	17391.53	571,815.97	11,328	8.31%

As of Monday, March 23, Metro mandated the use of operator barriers and implemented rear-door boarding on all directly operated and contracted service bus lines in an effort to provide additional safety for both customers and operators during this critical time. Thus far, operations personnel have reported positive feedback with this approach. Customer feedback is also being monitored to ensure that any necessary improvements can be executed in a timely manner.

Light and heavy rail service (A, Expo, Gold, Green, Red/Purple) is currently operating at 12-minute frequencies until 6 p.m. and 20-minute frequencies after 6 p.m. At this time, we are maintaining weekday consists as much as possible on all lines to allow capacity for social distancing systemwide. Based on a re-evaluation of ridership, rail services continue to run until midnight instead of 10 p.m., as reported in last week's update.

As mentioned previously, Metro is not considering halting transit services at this time, however staff will continue to monitor on-street reality, ridership levels and will adjust service as needed, including Sunday service schedule scenarios.

Customer Care Operations

In keeping with social distancing, we will be starting a work rotation of our Customer Care staff so that there is ample space to be both productive and safe. To accommodate this, we need to make some operational changes to our work hours and practices. The following changes will be made to the Customer Center operations, effective March 27. This information is being provided to the public through public notification, social media and the Metro website.

- The four Customer Centers, located at Wilshire/La Brea, East Los Angeles, Baldwin Hills and Gateway, will be open on their scheduled days of operation with limited hours from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Metro Information Contact Center (323.GOMETRO) will maintain normal operations from 6:30 a.m. – 7 p.m. Monday-Friday and 8-4:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.
- Customer Relations is temporarily suspending telephonic complaints and requesting customers to utilize thecustomerrelations@metro.net email or the Customer Comment form on Metro.net to submit their comment and concerns.

Mobility on Demand Service Changes

Beginning Wednesday, March 25, Metro made three temporary emergency adjustments to its Mobility on Demand (MOD) program:

1. suspending shared rides in support of social distancing;
2. offering point to point services to accommodate essential trips; and,
3. adding new essential destinations added beyond zone boundaries.

These changes were implemented swiftly due to the flexibility of the contract and the private sector partner and now allow essential trips to be made safely, predictably, and flexibly by folks without access to private options or frequent transit. Via has also created a pop-up within its app to discourage non-essential trips during this time.

Via communicated these updates to riders through emails and push notifications, and Metro has published an article to The Source. Drivers have been instructed to follow guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and wipe down all vehicle surfaces before driving, and as often as possible during shifts. Hours of service currently remain the same -- from 6:00 a.m. to midnight on weekdays.

Metro Bike Share

Metro Bike Share (MBS) continues to provide services to Angelenos as an integral part of the Metro transportation system. In response to the current COVID-19 crisis, Metro has worked with the MBS operator to enhance sanitation protocols. Following recommendations from the LA County Department of Public Health and the CDC, and in an effort to strengthen cleaning regimes systemwide, Metro is increasing cleaning of bikes and other MBS equipment, including implementing a process for cleaning MBS

equipment more frequently; ensuring appropriate cleaning materials and supplies are used; and maintaining staffing levels to implement the proposed sanitation protocols. MBS is also implementing an educational program reminding users of best hygiene practices to prevent the virus' spread. Metro will continue to review these protocols and ensure that they are adequate as the situation evolves.

LA Union Station

LA Union Station continues to operate under a partial closure with access to ticketing and transfers through defined areas. All other persons without station business or valid ticketing are denied entry.

Station management continues to work with all tenants of station to understand their economics and develop business plans to succeed through this crisis. Our leasing program continues with offers from new vendors under evaluation.

Inventory

Our team continues to monitor and order Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supplies. Working with our vendors, we have been able to increase inventory from 3 to 6-month supply.

Strengthened Cleaning Regimes

Metro continues to practice strengthened cleaning regimes in addition to regular cleaning activities in response to COVID-19 on all vehicles, stations and terminals, with a focus on high touchpoint areas, and at our Divisions and locations. Specifically, cleaning regimes are being performed by personnel wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), using approved disinfectants and cleaning materials, multiple times a day, to clean vehicles and locations prior to the start of, during, and at the end of revenue service.

We are distributing and installing approximately 100 newly received hand sanitizer units across every Metro Division and operating location. We are also in the process of installing hand sanitizer dispensers at 20 major transit stations and transfer points, including Union Station. We are encouraging all local governments to make a similar effort in and around their municipalities as we all strive to meet the challenges of personal hygiene for our employees and passengers. We will continue to research the security and maintenance of all such dispensers given installation in high public traffic areas. Further, we are researching and testing methods to install sanitizing units on buses and trains.

Communications & Government Relations

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act

As reported in the Legislative Alert, the U.S. House of Representatives adopted The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act. The legislation includes over \$2 trillion in COVID-19 related funds. Specifically, for transit agencies nationwide, the bill would provide \$25 billion through sections 5307, 5311, 5337, and 5340 of title 49, United States Code. According to preliminary estimates by Metro's professional staff,

our agency may receive approximately \$710 to \$810 million in assistance through S. 3548 – with specific terms on how these funds can be spent on matters directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Metro will, over the coming days, be working with relevant federal authorities, including but not limited to, the U.S. Department of Transportation and members of the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation, to ensure our agency takes all reasonable and prudent steps to allocate these important federal resources to their highest and best use in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

State Issues

Metro continues to work with the California Transit Association (CTA) to advance discussions around state assistance to transit agencies. CTA has transmitted a letter to the Governor and Legislature in support of an allocation of \$1 billion to assist transit agencies. Association members are now assessing the impacts of the ongoing discussions in Washington DC regarding assistance and how that impacts the financial condition of agencies around the state. The State Budget is expected to experience significant immediate pressures to address the current crisis as well as significant long-term pressures from any prolonged economic slowdown. The Legislature is expected to adopt a workload budget in June based largely on last year's budget. This will in all likelihood have to be revisited later in the year since the tax filing deadline has been extended. Our advocacy team in Sacramento remains fully engaged with the Governor's office, legislative leaders and our legislative delegation to ensure that we are keeping the delegation informed about the importance of maintaining the transit system and that we are front and center in any discussions regarding financial relief to public transit systems in California.

Preparations for April Board Cycle

The Metro Information Technology Systems department is ready to set up testing of the virtual meeting system in anticipation of holding the April Board and Committee meetings from your respective remote locations. We will also provide a mechanism for collecting public comment for all of these meetings. Our Board Relations team will reach out to each of the transportation deputies to schedule the individual office testing.

Workforce Communications

We continue to provide daily updates to our workforce and record outgoing messages for those who do not access their email regularly. In addition to providing ongoing education about social distancing and what staff can do personally to stop the spread and stay healthy, staff will be provided daily updates through MyMetro of positive confirmations in the workplace.

Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

Metro is closely monitoring the latest developments regarding COVID-19 and following guidance from the public health authorities to proactively implement measures that help protect the safety of our employees and customers. Without compromising the privacy of any member of our workforce, we will disclose incidences of COVID-19 reported at any of our locations.

To date, we have had a total of six confirmed cases of COVID-19 at five different locations: the Walsh Shea Corridor Constructors office on La Brea (Document Control Contractor), Division 5 (Metro Mechanic), Division 7 (2nd Shift Metro Supervisor), the Portal Widening/Turnback Facility (Design Consultant/Subcontractor), Division 5 (RMI Contract Security), and ExpressLanes Service Center in Torrance (contractor). In all cases, protocols are being followed for potentially affected workers and site cleaning.

Workforce Policy

As we enter the second week of Stay at Home/Safer at Home orders, federal guidance on workforce leave policies related to COVID-19 has been released. Under the federal guidance is issued, we will be complying with these guidelines effective April 5th. We will keep the Board informed as we learn the impacts of the new regulations.

Metro Management and Labor continue to conduct teleconferences twice a week to discuss our responses and actions to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Zero Tolerance for Harassment and Discrimination

During times of crisis, there is a potential to bring out the best in people, and the worst. From our own Metro employees, we've seen and heard some pretty terrific stories. Elsewhere, there have been reports of mistreatment and harassment of Asian Americans and other people of Asian descent. Because this behavior is unacceptable everywhere, at all times, I have taken this opportunity to remind our workforce that, amidst the challenges during these uncertain times, we encourage all employees to be mindful of instances of harassment, intimidation, or discrimination in the workplace and to act to prevent or correct the behavior. And as I've said from the first day I got here, I have zero tolerance for confirmed harassment or racial/gender discrimination anywhere in our organization. I won't have it. We are also looking at ways to communicate this philosophy on our system.

Contracts and Construction

Metro Reaffirms Commitment to Vendors

Metro remains committed to working with vendors during and after the COVID-19 crisis. Staff are reviewing payment measures to consider a range of approaches for ordering as well as processing payments that supports the continuity of supplies and considers the economic impacts of the COVID-19 virus on our vendors. Some examples of these considerations include expedited review and approve of submitted invoices, the expanded use our Purchase Card Program and modified payment terms. Metro will make every effort to help support the businesses that are so critical our local economy.

Construction

Construction projects are proceeding. There are sporadic reports of workers or subcontractors not reporting. However, overall the projects continue to move forward. We are monitoring the projects very closely.

Economic Outlook

On Thursday, March 26, I issued a letter to colleagues across LA County, i.e., Mayors, City Managers, City Finance & Transportation folks, etc., to advise them of steps that Metro has taken in emergency management, operations, maintenance, and workforce efforts to address the evolving COVID-19 crisis. I also took the opportunity to share my concerns over anticipated challenges, given the impact to sales tax revenues resulting from significant changes to economic activity due to recent shutdowns, advisories to limit movements and interactions, and the possible reduction in employment in the county. This letter was very similar to the conversations I've had with each of you on the same topic. I committed to seeking more information to assist us in planning for the decreased resources anticipated in the next 18 to 24 months. Most importantly, I asked for their continued partnership as we face these unprecedented challenges together.

NEXT STEPS

Metro continues to monitor and adapt to the evolving situation. As the crisis continues, we will stay in close contact with the Board to keep everyone informed.

For more information or if you have questions, please contact me directly at 213-922-7555 or our Chief of Staff, Nadine Lee, at 213-922-7950.