



Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

213.922.2000 Tel
metro.net

MARCH 9, 2020

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

FROM: JIM DE LA LOZA
CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER *JDL*

SUBJECT: TRANSIT TO PARKS STATUS UPDATE

ISSUE:

On June 27, 2019, the Metro Board of Directors approved Motion 22.1 (File 2019-0532) directing staff to implement several action items related to the Transit to Parks Strategic Plan (Plan). This Board Box provides a status update on those action items.

BACKGROUND:

On June 23, 2016, the Metro Board of Directors directed staff to develop a strategic plan to improve access to open space and parks (Board Motion 52, File 2016-0511). In response, staff developed the Plan, which presents a strategic vision for increasing access to parks and open space.

Building on Los Angeles County's 2016 Countywide Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment, which documented the lack of access to parks and open space in Los Angeles County, the Plan identified targeted, holistic ways to increase access to parks and open spaces, especially for communities of need. The Plan contains the following key components:

- Potential priority connections between 80 "Communities of Interest" and 200 "Parks of Interest," developed through a needs-based framework and a data-driven approach.
- Findings from the case study research, which resulted in potential access solution types including circulators, community park express shuttles, schedule enhancements, rail connectors, and on-demand solutions.

- Description of potential pilot projects focused on expanding bus/shuttle connections between communities of interest and parks of interest.
- Examples of supportive programs and initiatives including: transit to parks branding; marketing campaigns; wayfinding signage; inclusion of key parks in service planning and first/last mile planning analysis; parks educational components; and grant-writing support.
- Matrix summarizing how access solutions can be implemented and suggestions on potential entities, including Metro, that are best positioned to carry them out.

Status Update

When the Board of Directors adopted the Plan, they directed Metro staff to implement the action items listed in Board Motion 22.1. To address the multi-part motion, staff convened an interdepartmental group including Planning, Communications and Operations and developed the attached Transit to Parks Work Plan Matrix (Attachment A). The work plan builds on the research, analysis, and recommendations in the Plan and identifies implementation activities by department and timelines for completion.

Highlights of selected activities from the work plan are below, noting that Attachment A includes further detail, milestones, and a timeline for all Board-directed items:

- *Collaborate with County of Los Angeles Open Space District by contributing \$1 million in funding to create a grant program for cities and non-profits to fund transit to parks programs and initiatives:* Metro supported LA County Regional Park and Open Space District (RPOSD) staff by providing criteria for the 2019-2020 Recreation Access Competitive Grant Program guidelines that referenced the Plan and emphasized funding projects that implement programs and initiatives from the Plan. The Plan is available as a resource to applicants via the County's grant program webpage. The grant program is currently soliciting applications, which are due February 25, 2020.
- *Designate a Metro Transit to Parks liaison responsible for internal and external coordination of Transit to Parks Strategic Plan activities and monitoring:* The hiring process is underway to bring on a staff person on the First/Last Mile team. Their job duties include facilitating Transit to Parks activities and acting as the point of contact for outside parties interested in Metro Transit to Parks activities.
- *Utilize the Transit to Parks Strategic Plan as a guiding document in the development of a Regional Service Concept through the NextGen Bus Study:* One of the main components of the NextGen Service Plan is to increase service frequencies during non-commute hours. NextGen will create new trip-making opportunities during periods when people travel for leisure and/or to open spaces. Staff analyzed how NextGen service levels serve the park facilities identified in the Transit to Parks Strategic Plan.

The analysis showed that NextGen results in improved service levels to the park facilities identified in the Transit to Parks Strategic Plan during time periods when park users are more likely to travel to parks: weekdays during the middle of the day and evenings, as well on Saturdays and Sundays.

- *Utilize the information contained in this board report and accompanying study in the formation of the recommendations to integrate transit-to-parks planning into 28x'28 and Measure M project planning: The Plan will be used as a guiding document with respect to project planning in the Long Range Transportation Plan update.*

NEXT STEPS

Interdepartmental staff will continue to meet regularly to coordinate on the Transit to Parks work plan activities and timeline. Attachment A describes next steps and timing for each element of Board Motion 22.1. A status update to the Board of Directors will be provided every six months.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Transit to Parks Work Plan Matrix

Motion Items	Metro Dept. or Group Lead	Support Involved	Key Milestones	Timeline
1. Designate a Metro Transit to Parks liaison responsible for internal and external coordination of Transit to Parks Strategic Plan activities and monitoring.	Countywide Planning and Development: First/Last Mile	None	Recruitment is underway to hire a new staff person whose duties will including serving as the Transit to Parks liaison.	Early 2020
2. Create marketing and promotional materials for existing and future transit lines serving parks and open space areas including a web-based access tool, identifying transit routes to public lands.	Communications: Marketing	N/A	Munis working with Metro are eligible to receive branded kit-of-parts (no funding necessary). Metro branded kit-of-parts for Transit to Parks to include: - T2P logo with guidelines on how to use - E-blast header - PPT cover and slides - Report cover	Spring 2020
	Communications: Public Relations	N/A	Munis have the option to enter into a partnership agreement with Metro. For additional promotional opportunities (beyond the Metro branded kit-of-parts), individual project or program leads can opt to develop a strategic and custom partnership strategy with Metro by cross-promoting specific shuttles with their respective destination or brand partners through an in-kind exchange of promotional assets.	Fall 2020
3. Perform outreach to Councils of Governments (COGs), parks organizations, municipal operators and other partner agencies to promote the Transit to Parks Strategic Plan as a resource and encourage funding and implementation partnerships.	Communications: Community Relations (Local Government & External Affairs + Special Projects)	First/Last Mile	Techniques to be used: - Email and mail (if needed) Transit to Park Strategic Plan - Follow-up meetings/presentations - Distribute marketing materials Organizations to reach out to: - Councils of Governments - Park organizations - Community-based organizations - Metro Policy Advisory Committee - Service Councils - Transportation Advisory Committee - Accessibility Advisory Committee	January 2020 through Summer 2020

Motion Items	Metro Dept. or Group Lead	Support Involved	Key Milestones	Timeline
<p>CONTINUED 3. Perform outreach to Councils of Governments (COGs), parks organizations, municipal operators and other partner agencies to promote the Transit to Parks Strategic Plan as a resource and encourage funding and implementation partnerships.</p>	<p>Communications: Community Relations (Community Education)</p>	<p>First/Last Mile</p>	<p>Focus Top Priority Parks: - Meeting with admin of parks within 1.5-mile radius of Metro Light Rail lines. - Metro community education staff to attend events at parks within 1.5-mile radius of Metro Light Rail lines when feasible.</p> <p>Work with Munis, community/recreation centers, schools, senior centers, libraries, and CBOs to: - Choose area of outreach within 1.5 mile radius of Metro Light Rail lines. - Identify Munis that operate around the priority parks (brainstorm partnership ideas) - Inform recreation centers, schools, senior centers, and CBOs within 1.5 mile radius of Metro Light Rail lines (through presentations). - Utilize Metro On The Move Buddies - Share materials with the Aging and Disability Network</p> <p>Techniques to be used: - Material drop offs - E-blasts - Social Media - Presentations (continue promotion with Transportation Safety Program schools)</p>	<p>Spring/Summer 2020</p>
<p>4. Collaborate with the Los Angeles County Open Space District by contributing \$1 million in funding to create a grant program for cities and non-profits to fund transit to parks programs and initiatives.</p>	<p>Countywide Planning and Development: First/Last Mile</p>	<p>Federal/State Policy and Programming</p>	<p>Aug 2019 - Input Transit to Parks Strategic Plan criteria into County's Recreation Access solicitation Sep 9, 2019 - County solicitation opened Feb 25, 2020 - County solicitation closes June 2020 - Funds awarded FY22 - FY25 - Anticipated funding years</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>5. Pursue discretionary funding opportunities to Transit to Parks Strategic Plan activities including providing grant writing assistance to eligible partner agencies and non-profits.</p>	<p>Countywide Planning and Development: First/Last Mile</p>	<p>Federal/State Policy and Programming</p>	<p>Research relevant transit to parks grant programs Assess program requirements, cycle, and timing Outline grant writing assistance parameters</p>	<p>Fall 2020</p>
<p>6. Collaborate with County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation to determine a baseline number of Los Angeles County residents who lack a 10-minute walk or ride to a park. Support County of Los Angeles Parks in updating that data in congruence with the LA County Park Needs Assessment every 5-8 years.</p>	<p>Countywide Planning and Development: First/Last Mile</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Hold initial meeting with County Parks and Recreation to determine how to establish ongoing collaboration and timeline.</p> <p>Input Transit to Parks Strategic Plan into Recreation Access grant solicitation evaluation criteria. Metro representation through grant outreach process. Assist in grant application evaluation at the discretion of the County. Direct committed resources to selected project(s).</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Motion Items	Metro Dept. or Group Lead	Support Involved	Key Milestones	Timeline
7. Utilize the Transit to Parks Strategic Plan as a guiding document in the development of a Regional Service Concept through the NextGen Bus Study.	Operations	N/A	Staff assessed Plan-identified "Parks of Interest" and NextGen service concepts; analysis indicated improved service levels to the park facilities during the weekday (middle of the day and evening), Saturdays, and Sundays.	January 2020
8. Utilize the information contained in this board report and accompanying study in the formation of the recommendations to integrate transit-to-parks planning into 28x'28 and Measure M project planning.	OCEO and Countywide Planning and Development	N/A	Utilize the Transit to Parks Strategic Plan as a guiding document with respect to project planning in the LRTP to increase the public's access to parks and open space.	Summer 2020
9. Report back to the Board every 6 months with status updates.	Countywide Planning and Development: First/Last Mile	In coordination with other depts.	Regular status updates provided by Board Box	March 2020 and every 6 months