



Metro

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Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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OCTOBER 31, 2018

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

SUBJECT: 2018 ELECTION DAY FREE TRANSIT SERVICE

ISSUE

In response to October 2018 Board Approved Motion Item 40 (Attachment A) from Directors Garcetti, Kuehl, Ridley-Thomas, and Garcia, Metro will offer free transit service on Election Day scheduled on Tuesday, November 6, 2018. Polls will open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., however Metro's free ride period on Election Day will begin at 12:00 a.m. and end at midnight.

DISCUSSION

Metro staff is prepared to offer free bus, rail, and bike transit service on Election Day, Tuesday, November 6, 2018 as described below:

Operations

Bus and rail will operate normal weekday service on November 6, 2018. Bus Operations will utilize farebox covers to display information regarding free fares. Also, Bus and Train Operators will be instructed to communicate to all customers that fare is free. Rail Operations will be prepared to augment service if necessary and will assign personnel during peak periods to assist customers and monitor train and bus service on Election Day. Passenger information screens and announcements will provide information on free transit service and turnstiles/fare-gates will be unlocked.

TAP Transit Partner Agencies

Metro has partnered with Access Services and the following other transit agencies to provide free transit services on November 6, 2018 for Election Day: Antelope Valley Transit, Baldwin Park Transit, LADOT, Long Beach Transit, Pasadena Transit and Santa Clarita Transit.

Bike Share

Metro Bike Share will offer free bike rides all day long on November 6, 2018 for Election Day. Customers have been instructed to use promo code 1162018 at any station kiosk to get a free 30-minute Single Ride. Also, customers will be encouraged to share #pedaltothepolls photos with Metro on social @bikemetro for a chance to be featured.

Security and Law Enforcement

Metro Security and Law Enforcement staff will continue to monitor Metro service in an effort to ensure the safety of customers and employees. Fare compliance staff have been advised that transit service is free on Election Day for the period of 12:00 a.m. to midnight for bus, rail and bike share service. As a result, no fare compliance activities will take place on November 6. Contingency plans are in place in the event there is a need for additional law enforcement and security staff.

Communications

Metro Communication staff has implemented a Communications Work Plan to promote free rides on Election Day. Staff began laying the groundwork for the free rides with a post on The Source after the motion was introduced at the Executive Management Committee meeting on Thursday, October 18, 2018. Once the motion was formally approved by the Board on Thursday, October 25, 2018 Metro Media Relations issued a news release and shared the information through social media alerts.

Information about free service on Metro, Access Services and Bike Share on Election Day will continue via The Source and Metro's social media platforms. Take One brochures have also been produced and are being distributed across the system. Another news release will be sent prior to Election Day and staff anticipates various media interviews about the free rides up to Election Day.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will compile results and lessons learned for 2018 Election Day transit service and report back to the board by February 2019 on whether Metro should make free transit permanent on federal and statewide election days.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Item 40: Free Transit Service Election Day



Board Report

File #: 2018-0687, **File Type:** Motion / Motion Response

Agenda Number: 40.

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 18, 2018**

Motion by:

GARCETTI, KUEHL, RIDLEY-THOMAS, AND GARCIA

Item 40: Free Transit Service on Election Day

MTA should help reduce the barriers to voting for the individuals that rely on MTA for mobility. In the June 2018 primary election, Los Angeles County saw a voter turnout of just 28%, which is the second lowest of the 47 California counties that reported. Additionally, studies have shown that minority, low-income, persons with disabilities, and youth voters in particular have consistently lower turnout than average. These populations are also the ones most reliant on MTA for mobility.

Voters cannot reach polls without adequate means of transportation. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology's 2016 Survey of the Performance of American Elections (SPAЕ) found that approximately 30% of nonvoters across the country claimed that the lack of transportation to the polls was a factor for not voting. In California, that number rose to 51%.

Additionally, SPAЕ and similar studies showed that lack of access to transportation to get to polls disproportionately affects minority, low-income, persons with disabilities, and youth voters. For example, over 50% of non-voters said that a disability or illness was a factor in deciding not to vote and turnout for persons with disabilities has been declining.

To encourage voter turnout, transit operators across the country provide free public transportation on Election Day. Larger cities include Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Tampa, Kansas City, and Durham. In Minnesota, public transportation agencies are required by law to provide free rides on Election Day. The number of transit operators taking this approach continues to grow, and MTA should ensure that it does not fall behind.

SUBJECT: FREE TRANSIT SERVICE ON ELECTION DAY

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE MOTION by Garcetti, Kuehl, Ridley-Thomas and Garcia that the Board direct the CEO to:

- A. provide transit services free of fare on the November 6, 2018 election day;
- B. partner with Access Services to examine providing enhanced and/or reduced-fare services on the November 6, 2018 election day; and
- C. in consultation with the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, report back to the Board by the February 2019 cycle on whether or not to make free transit permanent on federal and statewide election days.