



# Metro

Welcome Aboard  
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## A PATH FORWARD

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Metro's Recovery Task Force

PROGRESS REPORT 1 — JUNE 8, 2020

This is the first progress report from  
Metro's COVID-19 Recovery Task Force.

It includes 12 early action recommendations  
to help LA County get back on our  
feet, pedals, wheels and rails.



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**In the early months of 2020,  
everything changed.**

COVID-19, the highly contagious virus, travelled around the world, sickening millions and bringing death to hundreds of thousands of souls. For those of us lucky to remain healthy, the threat of infection has already changed our daily lives. A year ago, if someone had told me what we'd be going through right now – I probably wouldn't have believed them. Who would think that we would wear face coverings (and often gloves) for every public interaction? Or that we would indefinitely stay "safer at home," immediately altering our work lives and family dynamics? And who would predict that, almost overnight, demand for Metro's bus and rail service would drop by 70%?

The importance of the impacts of COVID-19, both those now known and those that still lie ahead, is profound. We are in the middle of the most significant public health crisis in a century. Metro has responded by maintaining our lifeline service while encouraging only essential trips. These steps are necessary to promote public health and safety. My respect and gratitude go to all the front-line employees in the Metro family, the operators, mechanics, station attendants, custodial staff, system controllers and other critical team members who keep us running every day.

In addition to immediate day-to-day decision-making with my Senior Leadership team, I also formed a Recovery Task Force. It is their job to do the challenging but exciting thinking needed not to return us to normal – a congested and unsustainable LA County – but to take the bold steps necessary to move us forward. This progress report contains their initial findings and early recommendations.

This virus is a tragedy of global proportion. Yet for Metro, there is a responsibility here in this moment to create change, and we want to seize it. During this time our skies became bluer. Our roadways, once the most congested in the nation, flowed more freely. Our employees are focused on the most transit-dependent, and we are changing our daily operations to greatly improve fleet and station cleaning. Never has the need for a robust, safe and thriving transportation network been greater. The work I've asked of the Recovery Task Force is to recommend both immediate and longer-term actions that will position us to best serve customers, respond to changes in travel patterns, and continue or accelerate our push to expand mode choices for all LA County residents. As I write, protests over racism are taking place across the county, the nation and the world. It is vital for Metro to acknowledge that the pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on low-income communities of color, that most of our riders come from these vulnerable communities, and that Metro has a critical role to play in creating a more equitable society. I am pleased that the Recovery Task Force is analyzing recovery through an equity framework to prioritize better mobility for those who need it the most.

We will need the help of every division and department to make this list of sensible and bold ideas into daily practice. I have the highest confidence in our 10,000-strong team, and in our dedication to the 10 million who live, work and play in LA County. Let's show the world how this agency can pivot and recover. It's time to get to work.

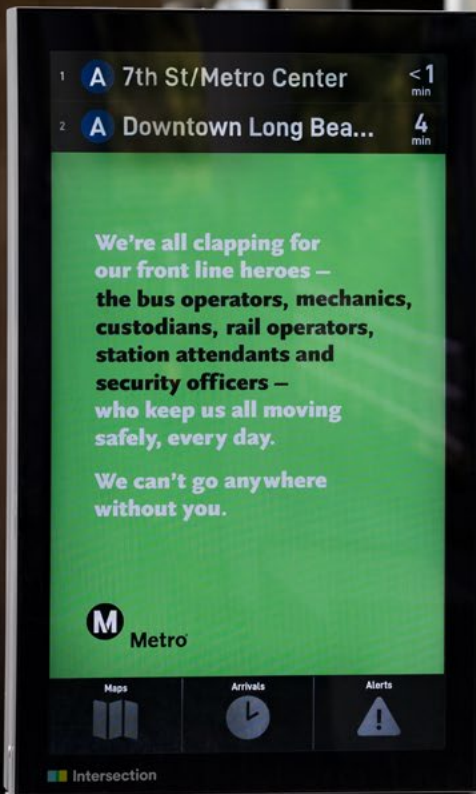


**Phillip A. Washington**  
CEO, Metro



# Task Force Charter and Goals

The COVID-19 Response Task Force is a staff committee at Metro responsible for providing advice and recommendations to the senior leadership team (SLT), Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Board of Directors on recovery from the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.





# Membership

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The Task Force is chaired by the Chief Innovation Officer and staffed by the Office of Extraordinary Innovation and Communications. Membership of the Task Force consists of Metro staff nominated by SLT members and chosen to secure a balanced membership with diverse experience and perspectives, with a preference for graduates of or participants in Metro Leadership Academy, ENO/Max, and the Women & Girls Governing Council. The Executive Officers for Equity and Race and Customer Experience are on the Task Force.

**Joshua Schank**, *OEI – Chair*

**Stephanie Burke**, *Human Capital Development*

**Peter Carter**, *Planning*

**Lilian de Loza-Gutierrez**, *Communications*

**KeAndra Cylear Dodds**, *OCEO*

**Paula Guevara**, *Civil Rights*

**Imelda Hernandez**, *Security*

**Nancy Hinojosa**, *Risk, Safety and Asset Management*

**Kyle Holland**, *Finance + Budget*

**Rani Narula-Woods**, *Operations*

**Olivia Nelson-Richard**, *TCU*

**Melissa Park**, *Congestion Reduction*

**Heather Repenning**, *Program Management*

**Heather Severin**, *Program Management*

**Georgia Sheridan**, *Planning*

**Fumi Sotozono**, *Audit*

**Jessica Spearman**, *Vendor/Contract Management*

**Quintin Sumabat**, *Operations*

**Alvin Trotter**, *Program Management*

**Elezanbee Vue**, *Operations*

**Aaron Weinstein**, *OCEO*

Staffed by **Mark Vallianatos** and **Emma Huang**, *OEI + John Gordon*, *Communications*

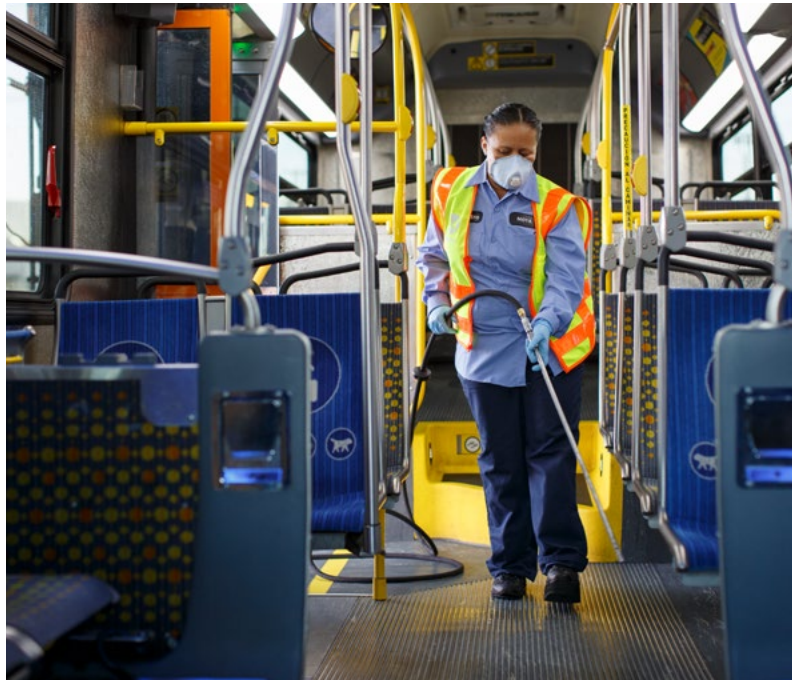
# Goals

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The Task Force will recommend a set of actions that Metro can take to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and to recover from it. Task force goals and deliverables include:

- 1 Identifying and recommending potential actions that Metro can take to respond to the pandemic; to recover after the pandemic; to help lead an equitable economic recovery for LA County; and to advance mobility without congestion as the 'new normal' after the pandemic.
- 2 Issuing monthly reports to the SLT, CEO and Board on progress towards a recovery plan, including early action items to consider taking.
- 3 Drafting a final recovery report.

Metro's Vision 2028 Strategic Plan, with its focus on world class transportation, a strong LA County and accountable Metro leadership, is the foundation for these efforts. The task force will also be flexible, identifying new strategies to adapt to changing circumstances.





# Progress to Date

The task force was launched in late April 2020. It has taken the following steps in its first month of work:

SLT members nominated staff to the Task Force Chair, and ratified the list of members. Once it was constituted, task force staff and members drafted and members signed a charter identifying goals, structure, roles and timelines.

Task force participants quickly identified more than 100 potential recommendations that can help Metro achieve its recovery goals. These ideas were drawn from programs and policies being implemented by Metro in response to COVID-19; from conversations with Metro staff on additional recovery options; and from research on recovery best practices underway at transit agencies around the world.

The task force established an equity subcommittee led by task force member KeAndra Cylear Dodds, the agency's Executive Officer for Equity & Race. The equity subcommittee is using a new equity tool to perform a rapid equity assessment of potential recommendations. The purpose of this equity analysis is to help identify which actions can help vulnerable customers and communities; reduce disparities; and mitigate any unintended harms.

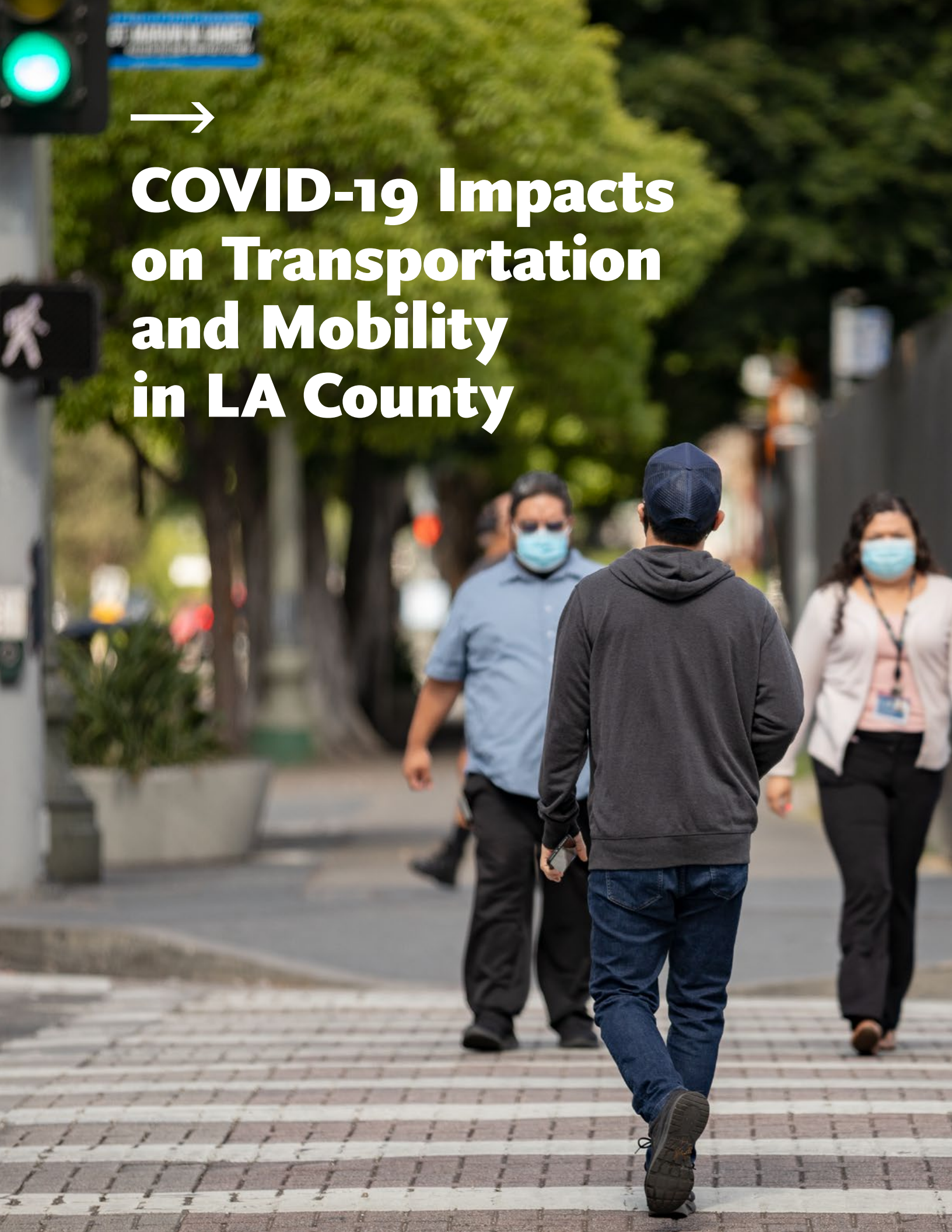
The task force chose an initial list of 12 early action recommendations, based on alignment with Vision 2028, the equity assessment, as well as on expected recovery benefits, timeliness and financial impacts. The chair presented these 12 ideas to the SLT and to the Policy and Planning Committee of the Board of Directors. Task force members also divided into small working groups to begin developing more detailed implementation plans for these early action items in collaboration with responsible departments.

To inform its deliberations, the task force heard presentations on resources and programs that could contribute to recovery. These included presentations on equity assessments; a survey of Metro bus operators; a research memo summarizing the pandemic's impacts on Metro and LA County and lessons from other disasters [see page 9]; the agency's unsolicited proposal process; and the Measure M Visionary Seed Fund. The Task Force Chair met regularly with the head of Metro's Incident Management Team to exchange updates.





# **COVID-19 Impacts on Transportation and Mobility in LA County**





**The COVID-19 pandemic is a rapidly-evolving crisis. Data up to the end of April 2020 revealed the following:**

- > An estimated 36 percent of LA County residents complied with the Safer at Home order, and personal miles traveled decreased 60 percent from January 2020 levels.<sup>1</sup> Rush hour traffic largely disappeared, with speeds up to 72 percent faster than normal rush hour speeds as of late March 2020. These faster speeds have been achieved with vehicle volumes reduced by only 35 percent.<sup>2</sup>
- > Metro services have experienced declines in usage since the LA County stay-at-home order. Transit ridership fell by 58 percent on Metro buses and 71 percent on rail. Metro ExpressLanes had an average reduction of 72 percent in transaction counts, Metro Park & Rides saw up to 90 percent decline in parking usage, Metro Bike Share experienced a 36 percent reduction in usage, and Metro's Mobility-on-Demand partnership with Via had around a 60 percent decline in usage.<sup>3</sup>
- > Most remaining trips taken on transit are essential, which demonstrates how transit is vitally important to the functioning of essential services, for riders and non-riders alike. In California, an estimated 36 percent of transit commuters work in essential industries, and half of these commuters are service workers in the most critical sectors, including healthcare, food service, public safety, transportation and government services, such as waste management.<sup>4</sup>
- > Differences in declines across transit modes reflect existing socio-economic disparities between bus and rail riders, as well as transit and non-transit riders. Metro lines that are experiencing the least ridership declines (with declines around half of the systemwide average) largely serve low-income communities of color. A survey conducted by Transit, a real-time transit prediction application, of 1,102 riders using Metro buses found that 85 percent of surveyed riders do not have access to a car, and 72 percent are using transit to get to work, and 28% to get to healthcare.
- > The death rate from COVID-19 shows stark disparities across income, race and ethnicity. In LA County, poor communities face three times the likelihood of death from COVID-19.<sup>5</sup> Of the people who died in the county, 12% are Black residents, even though they are 8% of the population, while 17.5% are Asian, who represent 14.5% of the population. COVID-19 puts a greater strain on households in low-income and minority communities, due to the disparate economic, physical and health conditions they tend to experience, which exacerbates the effects of the pandemic on their physical, social, economic and emotional well-being. Additionally, these communities are often the first to feel economic stress and the last to recover.<sup>6</sup>
- > LAEDC is projecting that by May 2020, the southern California region will experience a 27.4 percent drop in employment compared to the same time last year and the Los Angeles Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) will be closer to 32 percent. The food preparation and serving sector is likely to be the most severely impacted major occupation group in Southern California, and the year-over-year employment in May 2020 is estimated to decline by nearly 70 percent in this group.<sup>7</sup> A survey conducted by USC Dornsife suggests only 45 percent of Angelenos are still employed, as many employees are furloughed and unable to work – disproportionately African American and Latino individuals, and women.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See University of Maryland COVID-19 Impact Analysis Platform.

<sup>2</sup> These increases demonstrate the nonlinear relationship between speed and capacity, as highway vehicle miles traveled (VMT) have only decreased by roughly 35%. Nelson et al., "Empty Freeways, Cancelled Flights..."

<sup>3</sup> Data from Metro's Service Planning, ExpressLanes, Transportation Demand Management, and MOD teams.

<sup>4</sup> See Analysis of the 2014–2018 American Community Survey Microdata.

<sup>5</sup> See [latimes.com/california/story/2020-04-26/l-a-county-reports-18-new-coronavirus-deaths-says-poor-people-are-three-times-more-likely-to-die](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-04-26/l-a-county-reports-18-new-coronavirus-deaths-says-poor-people-are-three-times-more-likely-to-die)

<sup>6</sup> See [dashboard.publichealth.lacounty.gov/covid19\\_surveillance\\_dashboard](https://dashboard.publichealth.lacounty.gov/covid19_surveillance_dashboard)

<sup>7</sup> Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation, "Employment Impact of Covid-19: Southern California." April 21, 2020.

<sup>8</sup> See [dornsife.usc.edu/news/stories/3198/coronavirus-covid-19-job-loss-and-anxiety-increases/](https://dornsife.usc.edu/news/stories/3198/coronavirus-covid-19-job-loss-and-anxiety-increases/)



# Early Action Recommendations

The task force is recommending early actions that the agency can take in advance of the final recovery report. These are time-sensitive measures that will be more effective if they are implemented soon. Some of the early action items relate to immediate response measures to address health and safety priorities. Others are steps that can help Metro prepare for and position itself for recovery. The task force isn't working in a vacuum. Its members, drawn from diverse departments, are conduits to actions that Metro is already taking to respond to the pandemic and to prepare for recovery. In fact, many of the action items recommended by the task force are meant to reinforce and support steps that are ongoing within the agency.

Each recommendation consists of a summary of the recommendation, a justification section on why it could help Metro recover, a brief summary of equity impacts, and a list of goals from Metro's Vision 2028 Strategic Plan that would be advanced by the idea. There are also examples of how other transit agencies, public entities and private companies are taking similar actions.

It is important to keep in mind that the task force is a recommending committee, not a decision-making body. Decisions on whether and how to implement these ideas will be made by a combination of the Board of Directors, the SLT and responsible departments. The task force will track decisions and steps taken on these recommended early action items and will include updates in future progress reports.





## 1. A Rider-Led Recovery

### Recommendation:

Survey Metro customers on their current transportation patterns and modes, future transportation plans and customer experience.

### Justification:

Help identify how quickly ridership may recover and gain insights on customer experience priorities, including what would make customers feel safe to use our services.

### Equity:

Survey can determine how different racial and income groups have experienced transportation during the pandemic and how they plan to travel in the future.

### Vision 2028 Goals

2.2 Improve legibility, ease of use, and trip information on the transit system.

3.3 Conduct genuine public and community engagement to achieve better mobility outcomes for the people of LA County.

### Best Practices:

Denver RTD conducted a survey of nearly 2,700 people that showed the public remains apprehensive about engaging in social activities amid the spread of the coronavirus, including riding RTD services. The majority of those who had not used transit in the past 30 days said they will take a wait-and-see approach to the pandemic before riding again.<sup>9</sup>

The Port Authority of Allegheny County surveyed riders before restrictions were gradually eased. A series of questions asks riders whether they are aware of safety precautions the agency has taken, whether they expect to return to work soon and how often they expect to use transit.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> See [metro-magazine.com/management-operations/news/738409/public-cautious-about-using-transit-rtd-survey-shows](https://metro-magazine.com/management-operations/news/738409/public-cautious-about-using-transit-rtd-survey-shows)

<sup>10</sup> See [post-gazette.com/news/transportation/2020/05/13/Port-Authority-survey-increase-service-Campos-Allegheny-County-COVID-19/stories/202005130135](https://post-gazette.com/news/transportation/2020/05/13/Port-Authority-survey-increase-service-Campos-Allegheny-County-COVID-19/stories/202005130135)



## 2. Safer Streets for All

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### Recommendation:

Work with the Board to authorize cities that received 2020 Open Street Grants to repurpose some or all of funding on safe/slow street programs; and explore ways to encourage other LA County jurisdictions to implement slow/safe streets.

*Update: Metro's Board passed a motion implementing this idea at its May 2020 meeting. (Board motion 2020-0375)*

### Justification:

Create more space for safe, distanced walking and biking for transportation and recreation; showcase how road space can be repurposed for more multi-modal transportation.

### Equity:

This offers an equity opportunity to prioritize low-income communities, which tend to have overcrowding, less access to parks and open space, higher levels of vehicle collisions and injuries, and fewer bike lanes. To ensure marginalized communities are engaged in solution, Metro should encourage cities to partner with CBOs for outreach and education.

### Vision 2028 Goals

- 1.1 Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs.
- 1.2 Improve safety on the transit system and reduce roadway collisions and injuries.
- 1.2 Improve connectivity to provide seamless journeys.
- 3.2 Catalyze transit-oriented communities and help stabilize communities where these investments are made.
- 4.1 Work with partners to build trust and make decisions that support the goals of the Vision 2028 Plan (including improving multi-modal transportation options).
- 5.1 Leverage funding and staff resources to accelerate the achievements of goals and initiatives prioritized in this Vision 2028 Plan.

### Best Practices:

Oakland Department of Transportation (OakDOT) launched a “Slow Streets” initiative designating 74 miles of neighborhood streets to bikes, pedestrians, wheelchair users and local vehicles only across the city. Oakland utilized streets identified in its 2019 bike plan update, and relied on a “light-touch” approach that leveraged volunteers and existing in-house resources.”

Philadelphia, Boston, San Francisco and Los Angeles and dozens of other cities have also enacted some amount of Slow Streets/ Safe Streets/Open Streets.

<sup>11</sup> See [oaklandca.gov/news/2020/city-of-oakland-announces-oakland-slow-streets-program-starting-saturday-to-enable-safer-walking-cycling](https://oaklandca.gov/news/2020/city-of-oakland-announces-oakland-slow-streets-program-starting-saturday-to-enable-safer-walking-cycling)





### 3. Creating a Safe Space

#### Recommendation:

Test, adopt and publicize new cleaning methods, such as UV, Ozone and cleaning robots, while also increasing publicity of existing cleaning practices, especially through videos.

#### Justification:

Testing and implementing new cleaning will advance health and safety for riders and staff; publicizing current and new cleaning practices will help inform and reassure riders currently using the system and those who will be making transportation decisions as stay at home orders are modified.

#### Equity:

Enhanced cleaning will benefit Metro's riders who are primarily low-income and people of color, as well as riders with underlying health conditions that make them more at risk of COVID-19. Look for opportunities for small and DBE businesses in any new cleaning contracts and study side effects of new cleaning methods to protect sensitive riders/staff.

#### Vision 2028 Goals

- 1.2 Improve safety on the transit system.
- 2.2 Improve legibility, ease of use, and trip information (including safety and comfort) on the transit system.
- 2.3 Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points.
- 5.6 Foster and maintain a strong safety culture.

#### Best Practices:

New York MTA has launched a \$1 million UV light pilot program to kill COVID-19 on buses and trains and at stations. It will launch first on subways and buses and if successful will expand to Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad.<sup>12</sup>

Hong Kong Mass Transit Railways is using an automated robot to clean hard to reach areas. The robot sprays hydrogen peroxide solution to conduct deep cleaning and decontamination in train compartments and stations. Recently, the robot was dispatched to disinfect staff changing rooms, staff toilets and mess room, and passenger elevators at the Mong Kok East Station after a staff member was diagnosed with COVID-19.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> See [theverge.com/2020/5/20/21265221/nyc-mta-ultraviolet-light-uvc-coronavirus-disinfect-puro-pictures](https://theverge.com/2020/5/20/21265221/nyc-mta-ultraviolet-light-uvc-coronavirus-disinfect-puro-pictures)

<sup>13</sup> See [qz.com/1816762/coronavirus-hong-kongs-mtr-subway-uses-robot-to-disinfect-trains/](https://qz.com/1816762/coronavirus-hong-kongs-mtr-subway-uses-robot-to-disinfect-trains/)



## 4. Faster Buses

### Recommendation:

Partner with local jurisdictions to accelerate implementation of bus-only lanes and other speed and reliability measures in areas that Operations has identified as past congestion hot spots.

### Justification:

The current period of lighter than usual vehicle traffic is a chance to implement more bus lanes with fewer immediate conflicts with traffic and parking. Bus-only lanes will allow greater speed and reliability, helping keep buses competitive with single occupancy vehicles. Faster travel can also contribute to more frequency and less crowding.

### Equity:

This offers an equity opportunity by prioritizing bus lanes on routes used by essential workers, who are primarily low-income, people of color, and those that connect equity-focused communities. To allow input from and to get information to ESL populations and riders without smart phones, staff can streamline outreach, rapidly introduce lanes and survey rider for feedback.

### Vision 2028 Goals

- 1.1 Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs.
- 1.2 Invest in a world-class bus system that is reliable, convenient, and attractive to more users for more trips.
- 4.1 Work with partners to build trust and make decisions that support the goals of the Vision 2028 Plan.

### Best Practices:

MBTA is considering adding more dedicated bus lanes to speed up travel to meet expected demand as ridership slowly returns and congestion returns. MBTA believes that dedicated bus-only lanes will allow buses to move faster, allowing the buses to make more trips with people safely spread out on the buses.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> See [wbur.org/bostonmix/2020/05/11/mbta-reopening-service-plan](https://www.wbur.org/bostonmix/2020/05/11/mbta-reopening-service-plan)





## 5. Masks for our Riders

### Recommendation:

Explore ways to distribute masks to riders, to help the recently-introduced face covering requirement succeed. Distribution of masks can focus on hot spots identified by bus operators, riders and public health data.

### Justification:

Distributing masks can increase compliance with face covering requirements, enhancing health benefits. It can also help avoid conflicts and uncertainty if customers try to ride without masks.

### Equity:

This presents an equity opportunity through focused distribution in areas with high concentrations of COVID-19 cases, particularly where residents lack resources to purchase masks, as well as through the use of culturally competent education to implement the new face covering requirement, rather than law enforcement, which might target marginalized communities.

### Vision 2028 Goals

- 1.1 Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs.
- 1.2 Improve safety on the transit system.
- 2.2 Improve legibility, ease of use, and trip information (including safety and comfort) on the transit system.
- 2.3 Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points.
- 5.6 Foster and maintain a strong safety culture.

### Best Practices:

Montreal and Laval public transit authorities and local officials are handing out thousands of free masks to commuters.<sup>15</sup>

SEPTA and CapMetro in Austin, Texas, are distributing free masks to riders.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> See [globalnews.ca/news/6981885/montreal-laval-coronavirus-masks-distribution/](https://globalnews.ca/news/6981885/montreal-laval-coronavirus-masks-distribution/)

<sup>16</sup> See [spectrumlocalnews.com/tx/austin/news/2020/04/18/cap-metro-to-distribute-free-masks-to-riders](https://spectrumlocalnews.com/tx/austin/news/2020/04/18/cap-metro-to-distribute-free-masks-to-riders); [nbphiladelphia.com/news/coronavirus/septa-providing-face-masks-for-riders-but-urges-only-take-one/2364363/](https://nbphiladelphia.com/news/coronavirus/septa-providing-face-masks-for-riders-but-urges-only-take-one/2364363/)



## 6. Matching Service with Demand

### Recommendation:

Restore more frequent transit service to stay ahead of demand, and retain rear door boarding as an option.

### Justification:

Restoring more frequent bus and rail service in stages and retaining rear door boarding on buses as an option, can both make transit competitive, and can allow physical distancing and reduce overcrowding. There is evidence that service cuts during past crises led to long term reductions in ridership.

### Equity:

This presents an equity opportunity by prioritizing more frequent service and retaining rear door boarding on lines currently experiencing overcrowding, which can help essential workers and our primarily low-income, riders of color through mobility gains and health protection.

### Vision 2028 Goals

- 1.2 Improve safety on the transit system.
- 1.3 Develop simplified, sustainable, and comprehensive pricing policies to support the provision of equitable, affordable, and high-quality transportation services.
- 2.2 Improve legibility, ease of use, and trip information (including safety and comfort) on the transit system.
- 2.3 Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points.
- 5.6 Foster and maintain a strong safety culture.

### Best Practices:

Pittsburg Port Authority is assigning longer, articulated buses to trips with the highest ridership to allow riders to maintain a safe distance from each other. It is also maintaining off-peak service.<sup>17</sup>

Boston's MBTA has yet to dramatically reduce service despite ridership declines in the range of 75-90 percent. The MBTA is also adding frequency on busier bus routes to ensure riders and transit workers can maintain safe physical distance on board. Routes where the MBTA is reducing service include the weekday express routes, where most of the riders are now working from home.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> See [post-gazette.com/news/transportation/2020/04/07/Port-Authority-nonessential-riders-COVID-19-bigger-buses-pittsburgh/stories/202004070119](https://post-gazette.com/news/transportation/2020/04/07/Port-Authority-nonessential-riders-COVID-19-bigger-buses-pittsburgh/stories/202004070119)

<sup>18</sup> See [post-gazette.com/news/transportation/2020/04/07/Port-Authority-nonessential-riders-COVID-19-bigger-buses-pittsburgh/stories/202004070119](https://post-gazette.com/news/transportation/2020/04/07/Port-Authority-nonessential-riders-COVID-19-bigger-buses-pittsburgh/stories/202004070119)



## 7. Working from Home

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### Recommendation:

Update Metro telecommute policy to allow more staff to telecommute – even after the pandemic; and begin to engage major employers, agencies and other stakeholders to develop a regional pact to expand telecommuting and implement staggered work hours where feasible.

### Justification:

Telecommuting can help avoid a surge in single occupancy vehicle trips and congestion when more businesses open.

### Equity:

This presents an equity opportunity by expanding job opportunities for people with disabilities, and workers who can work from home while caring for children and the elderly or sick. Marginalized communities tend to be less represented amongst workers that can work from home, so employers should track the demographic details of telecommuters to understand who benefits and if there are unintended consequences.

### Vision 2028 Goals

- 1.3 Manage transportation demand in a fair and equitable manner.
- 4.1 Work with partners to build trust and make decisions that support the goals of the Vision 2028 Plan.
- 4.2 Drive mobility agendas, discussions, and policies at the state, regional and national levels.
- 5.4 Apply prudent commercial business practices to create a more effective agency.

### Best Practices:

The U.S. federal government, the nation's largest employer, has issued new guidance on liberalizing telework and has urged other agencies to maximize telework flexibilities.<sup>19</sup>

Large private employers, including Twitter, Amazon, Microsoft, Facebook, Google, Apple, Airbnb, Lyft, Chevron, Square, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* have either encouraged or mandated employees to telecommute as a result of the outbreak, and some have announced that options for remote work will be made permanent.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> See [brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2020/03/17/covid-19-makes-the-benefits-of-telework-obvious/](https://brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2020/03/17/covid-19-makes-the-benefits-of-telework-obvious/)

<sup>20</sup> See [latimes.com/business/story/2020-03-12/amazon-google-workers-work-from-home-coronavirus](https://latimes.com/business/story/2020-03-12/amazon-google-workers-work-from-home-coronavirus)



## 8. Contactless Payment

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### Recommendation:

Rapidly introduce a contactless, visual ticket purchase and payment option in Metro's new official app, Transit, as an option to accompany TAP card payment. To smooth out demand, make off-peak service free for a limited, promotional period when there is a rise in ridership and crowding on Metro bus and rail. Note: this is not intended to change enforcement practices.

### Justification:

A non-contact way to pay will reduce physical risks and can help reassure customers. An additional way to pay may also increase payments during a period in which fares are not being enforced. A limited-time promotion with free or reduced non-peak fares can help encourage customer to download the Transit app and can help reduce crowding during peak times.

### Equity:

This presents an equity opportunity by providing a new, safer way to pay, which is accessible for all people with smart phones, regardless of income, race, or other demographic, who can use the Transit app. We do not anticipate that this recommendation would create any burdens at this time.

### Vision 2028 Goals

- 1.1 Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs.
- 1.2 Invest in a world-class bus system that is reliable, convenient, and attractive to more users for more trips.
- 1.2 Improve connectivity to provide seamless journeys.
- 1.2 Improve safety on the transit system.
- 2.2 Improve legibility, ease of use, and trip information (including safety and comfort) on the transit system.
- 2.3 Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points.
- 5.6 Foster and maintain a strong safety culture.



### Best Practices:

At least nine transit agencies have accelerated or started the process of introducing mobile ticketing in response to COVID-19.

Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority, for example, is already integrated with Transit, and has moved up the launch of mobile ticketing to May.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> See [i-riderta.org/news/transit-app-is-now-the-official-gdrtta-mobility-app-platform](https://i-riderta.org/news/transit-app-is-now-the-official-gdrtta-mobility-app-platform)

## 9. Re-Imagining Projects

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### Recommendation:

Prioritize and re-examine major capital projects in a recovery framework based on criteria, such as enhancing mobility and ridership, equity and Title VI compliance, health and economic development. Projects can be examined and prioritized to advance or be placed on hold; to accelerate or decelerate; and through adjustments to cope, mode and/or delivery method.

### Justification:

Budget challenges, the economic and job benefits of capital construction, and the opportunity for a new normal of mobility without congestion provide an opportunity to re-examine Metro's capital program and maximize the positive impacts of each project and the system as a whole.

### Equity:

Prioritizing capital projects solely based on fiscal factors could lead to decisions that negatively impact equity-focused communities or cause Title VI challenges. A broader analysis should include equity and also consider impacts to SBEs, DBEs and DVBES.

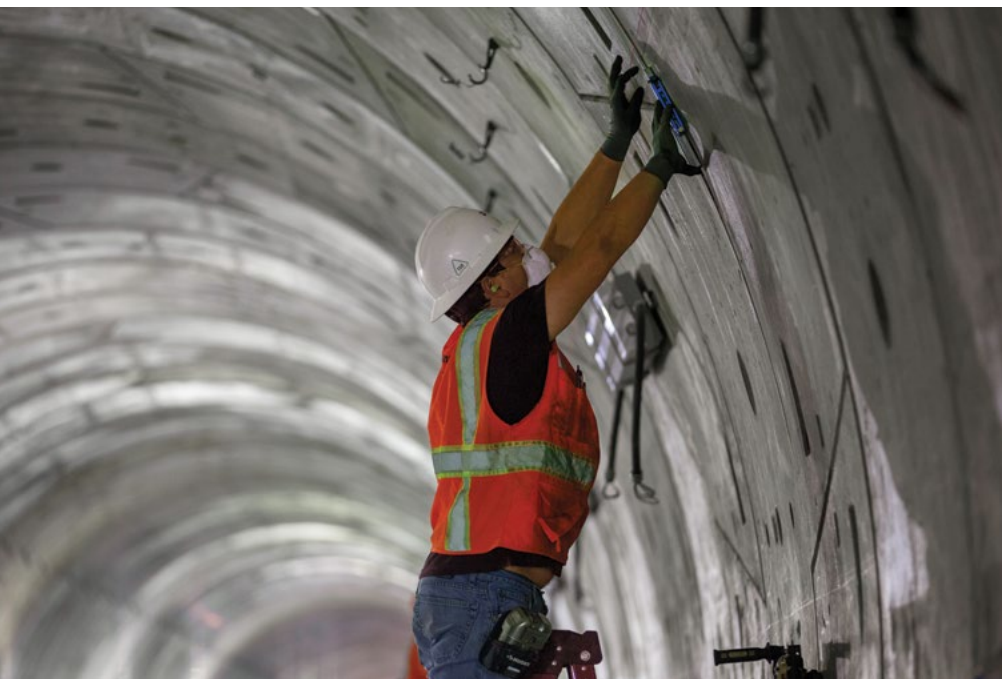
### Vision 2028 Goals

- 1.1 Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs.
- 1.1 Expand the transportation system as responsibly and quickly as possible.
- 1.2 Invest in a world-class bus system that is reliable, convenient, and attractive to more users for more trips.
- 1.2 Improve connectivity to provide seamless journeys.
- 3.1 Leverage its transit investments to catalyze transit-oriented communities and help stabilize neighborhoods where these investments are made.
- 5.1 Leverage funding and staff resources to accelerate the achievement of goals and initiatives prioritized in the Vision 2028 Plan.
- 5.2 Exercise good public policy judgment and sound fiscal stewardship.

### Best Practices:

The Paris Metropolitan region has announced plans for 400 miles of new cycletracks in response to the pandemic.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> See [forbes.com/sites/carltonreid/2020/04/22/paris-to-create-650-kilometers-of-pop-up-corona-cycleways-for-post-lockdown-travel/#1449ea8b54d4](https://forbes.com/sites/carltonreid/2020/04/22/paris-to-create-650-kilometers-of-pop-up-corona-cycleways-for-post-lockdown-travel/#1449ea8b54d4)



## 10. Better Bike Share

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### Recommendation:

Study options to enhance the Metro Bike Share program, with goals of more locations (especially equity-focused communities) and more use. Two options to study are:

- > Rebid contract with potential partners, such as municipalities and college campuses, to develop a no-cost, countywide bike share system.
- > Bring Metro Bike Share operation and maintenance 'in-house' as a core Metro operation performed by Metro staff that can be located at all Metro stations.

### Justification:

During COVID-19, Metro Bike Share has seen a lower reduction in use than Metro bus, rail and parking, suggesting that there is interest in bike share as a physically-distanced transportation option. Many cities around the world are promoting biking as an alternative to driving during and after the pandemic. Other bike share systems in the region are struggling, providing an opportunity to reexamine bike share in LA county.

### Equity:

Improving bike share can enhance equity if more bikes are available in areas where low-income residents and marginalized communities live and work, and they are accompanied by safety improvement to reduce collisions and injuries, which tend to be higher in those neighborhoods. Study of options for bike share should examine locations, cost and payment options, and messaging/promotion to diverse communities.

### Vision 2028 Goals

1.1 Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs.

1.2 Improve connectivity to provide seamless journeys.

3.2 Catalyze transit-oriented communities and help stabilize communities where these investments are made.

4.1 Work with partners to build trust and make decisions that support the goals of the Vision 2028 Plan (including improving multi-modal transportation options).

5.1 Leverage funding and staff resources to accelerate the achievements of goals and initiatives prioritized in this Vision 2028 Plan.



### Best Practices:

Capital Bike Share in the Washington D.C. region has made rides of up to 30 minutes free for essential workers during the pandemic.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> See [capitalbikeshare.com/blog/essential-workers-program](https://capitalbikeshare.com/blog/essential-workers-program)



## 11. Homes for All

### Recommendation:

Expand social service resources and partnerships, including on-site services, to increase ability to connect unhoused riders on the Metro system with services and housing.

### Justification:

The presence of people taking non-essential trips prevents social distancing, threatens the public health of all riders and makes some feel uncomfortable. Research shows that enforcement is not effective in addressing homelessness. Transit agencies cannot solve the problem of homelessness alone, but with the right policies, partnerships and programs, they can create a safer and more comfortable environment for all transit users. Additionally, helping unhoused riders find housing and services contributes to Metro's strategic plan goal 3.4 of helping solve homelessness.

### Equity:

This presents an equity opportunity by helping unhoused people find housing and services, and allows essential riders to socially distance and reduce the public health risks.

### Vision 2028 Goals

- 2.1 Improve security.
- 2.3 Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points.
- 3.4 Play a strong leadership role in efforts to address homelessness in LA County.
- 4.1 Work with partners to build trust and make decisions that support the goals of the Vision 2028 Plan.



## 12. New Mobility for the Path Forward

### Recommendation:

Pilot and expand alternative services following new models, such as the MicroTransit and Mobility on Demand contracts. This may include partnerships with public, private and community operators for complimentary programming.

### Justification:

To improve mobility in the region and supplement the Metro network, piloting new and alternative services can be cost effective and offer new learning on non-SOV options.

### Equity:

As with Metro's on-demand pilots, this recommendation can and will prioritize equity-focused communities and people with challenges accessing either traditional transit or private services.

### Vision 2028 Goals

- 1.1 Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs.
- 1.1 Expand the transportation system as responsibly and quickly as possible.
- 1.2 Improve connectivity to provide seamless journeys; explore opportunities for expanding access to shared, demand-responsive transportation options for everyone.
- 2.3 Improve customer satisfaction at all customer touch points.



### Best Practices:

LA Metro's on-demand services have effectively adapted and adjusted service models to accommodate essential trips for customers who need to access services, such as grocery stores, pharmacies and medical centers.<sup>24</sup>

Portland DOT has temporarily waived e-scooter daily fees in exchange for Spin, reducing the cost of a ride by about 50 percent. Healthcare workers can apply online for free, unlimited 30-minute Spin rentals and a helmet.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> See [thesource.metro.net/2020/03/25/metros-mobility-on-demand-service-now-running-point-to-point-trips-within-service-zones/](https://thesource.metro.net/2020/03/25/metros-mobility-on-demand-service-now-running-point-to-point-trips-within-service-zones/)

<sup>25</sup> See [www.oregonlive.com/bikes/2020/04/07/the-portland-bureau-of-transportation-is-slashing-fees-for-biketown-and-e-scooter-rides/](https://www.oregonlive.com/bikes/2020/04/07/the-portland-bureau-of-transportation-is-slashing-fees-for-biketown-and-e-scooter-rides/)

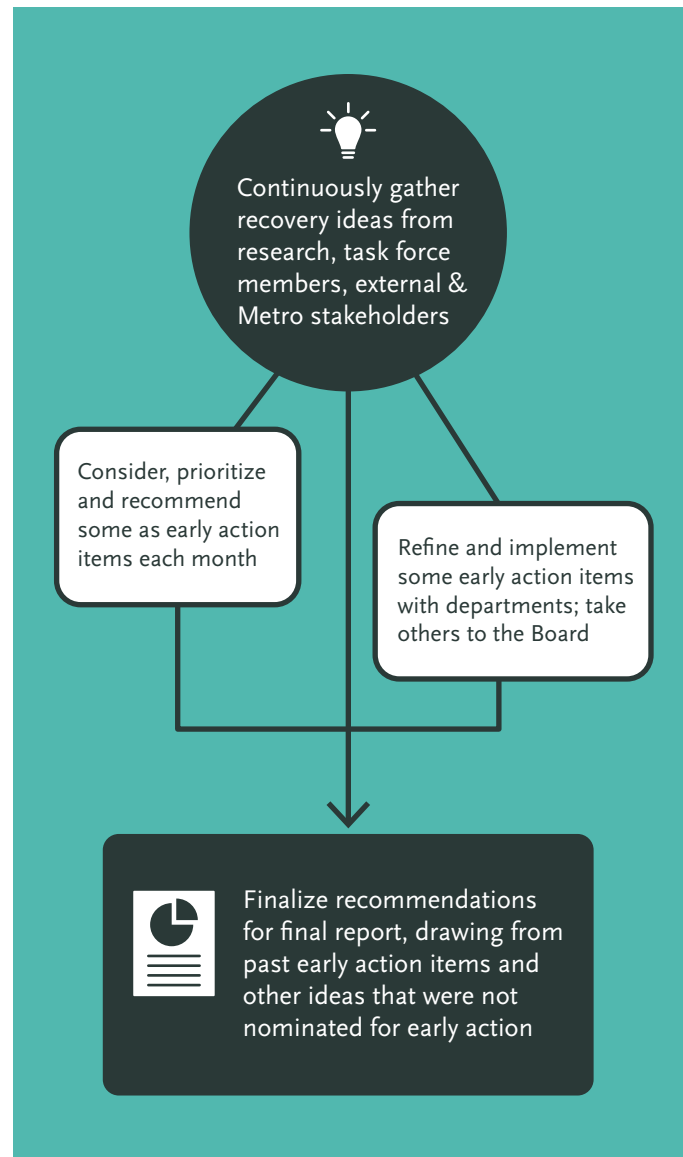


# Work Plan and Next Steps

The COVID-19 Recovery Task Force was established to develop a recovery plan and to recommend early action items. Decision makers in Metro, including the Board of Directors, Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and CEO, will determine whether, how and when to implement recovery ideas.

To provide the best possible advice to Metro leaders, representatives of the task force will regularly update SLT and the Board on our progress. The task force will conduct outreach to the public and stakeholders to share recommendations and seek ideas that can contribute to the recovery plan. The task force reserves the potential to bring forward early action items each month (May through September 2020). Some of these action items can be implemented by relevant departments. Others will require Board action, which can be initiated by the recommendations from the task force or by motions from Board members.

The task force's final report will bring together prior early action items along with other important, but less time-sensitive, recovery recommendations. The release of the report will provide another opportunity for Metro to make decisions and take actions. The task force intends to release the final report at the end of September 2020.





# Contact Us



For additional information, to ask questions or provide comments, please use the following contact tools:



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[metro.net/recovery](https://metro.net/recovery)