

Better Buses for LA Work Group Meeting
Tuesday March 17th 3:30 - 4:30pm via zoom

Join Zoom Meeting - **please video chat if possible - great to see faces**
<https://zoom.us/j/744596513?pwd=VXJ2U2RqL1Q3SDgwSHhKQmZYSGxzQT09>

Meeting ID: 744 596 513
Password: 308860

One tap mobile
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Purpose of meeting: to check in with friends and allies about concerns and impacts of COVID-19 and what we as transportation advocates can be doing to support access to safe transportation options for everyone.

Agenda:

Welcome/Introductions

- **Jessica Meaney, Investing in Place and Madeline Brozen, UCLA Lewis Center for Regional Studies**
 - Key Zoom tips:
 - Be patient - we might hit some bumps during this video chat.
 - Mute yourself and if possible use a video screen of yourself - nice to see faces.
 - Jessica and other panelists can mute all speakers, but helpful to mute yourself too.
 - Use the chat box.
 - We will break up into small groups after speakers to connect more

Updates and calls to action from Healthy Los Angeles newly formed coalition

<http://healthyla.org>

- David Levitus and ACT-LA's Laura Raymond and Scarlett de Leon

Updates from Metro

- Joni Honor, Deputy Executive Officer, Communications/Public Relations

Updates on Green New Deal and more

- Alissa Walker, Curbed
- [The Green New Deal for Transportation](#)

Break out into smaller groups for discussion (20min)

- Find volunteer who can take notes and provide report back

Breakout group suggested questions:

- Check in
- What questions do people have for Metro?
- Metro has to prepare its own emergency response of their own - what needs to be included in it?
- What are short term things to be focused on? What should we be tracking?
- And what now more than ever do we need to be championing, thinking of, planning for?
- What are other spaces/issues are organizing to support vulnerable community members and neighbors - how can we plug in, support, advocate with

Report backs from breakout groups

Notes

Attendees (57)

- Jessica Meaney, Investing in Place and Madeline Brozen, UCLA Lewis Center for Regional Studies
- Madeline Bronzon, Deputy Director, Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies
- David Levitus, LA Forward
- Vyki Englert, Compiler LA
- Deborah Murphy

- Joe Linton
- Benjamin Verheiden
- David Klappholz
- Pamela O'Conner
- Miranda Rodriguez
- Dorthy Wong
- Jennifer A Gill
- doreen Morrissey
- Lyndsey Nolan
- Keegan McChesney
- Chris Chavez
- Reed A
- Carolyn Angius
- Elizabeth Medrano, WORKS
- John Britton
- Jerard Wright
- Jenny
- Alissa Walker
- Priscilla Freduah-Agyemang, SCAG
- KeAndra
- WendyOrbitz
- Rubina Chazarian
- Gloria Ohland
- Josh Kurpies & Stewart Lozano from Asm Bloom's Office
- Andrés Carrasquillo
- Khalilha Haynes, Estolano Advisors
- Tulsi Patel, Estolano Advisors
- Jayro Queme
- Edgar
- Carolynn Johnson
- Cassie Halls
- Stacey
- Mayaan Dembo
- Tom Bellino
- Kristopher Fortin
- Lorenzo Mutia
- Liz DeWolf
- Hector Huevo, Jobs to Move America
- Bryn Lindblad, Climate Resolve

Updates and calls to action from Healthy Los Angeles newly formed coalition

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- David Levitus of LA Forward and ACT-LA's Laura Raymond and Scarlett de Leon
- Things have been moving quickly. Bonin's office in particular has been championing some of these issues, started an op-ed for LAT but instead created a website. We have labor groups, env signons, religious, and the initial impulse is what can we do to protect from the health, social and economic impacts of the pandemic.
- What we proposed is a full sweep of protections, for not just resid renters, but eviction moratoriums -- mayor's wasn't strong enough, pushing for longer payback, inability for landlords to still file for evictions, push for foreclosure prevention not happening right now, pushing to prevent evictions in commercial spaces b/c we know small biz is being devastated. Other things on housing:
- Unhoused -- stopping criminalization that was still going as of yesterday. ie: taking tents down in the rain. Finding homes, stopping harassment, providing more hygiene
- Third group, protecting workers. Sick leave policy
- Pushing for direct cash assistance programs. Motions this weekend to ban street vending temporarily. Unions and LAANE, trying to make sure workers still working are getting training they need to stay safe.
- Dozens of motions were heard at City Council today. The situation is very fluid, David missed council.
- Still lots of heavy lifting that needs to be done.
- State level housing -- pushing on the Governor to put together a stronger eviction. What he put together just allowed the local govs to prevent evictions. Want to ensure folks don't have to go to court, ideally stop payments entirely.
- Bonin motion includes a very long term payback period.
- Next steps moving forward. This is very ad hoc. There's now over 100 signers. No formal structure. Many local orgs have signed on.
- No transit/mobility items have been discussed by this coalition yet.
- Laura, No voting yet as of 10 minutes ago.
- Q&A
 - This is a lot of policy, what does operationalizing this look like?
 - In particular, the eviction moratorium needs to be amended because the burden is on renters right now to prove stress under Covid19. Want a stop on *all* evictions.

Updates from Metro

- ~~Joni Honor, Deputy Executive Officer, Communications/Public Relations~~
- Steve Hymon
- What is Metro doing? What can we do to help as advocates?
- Continuing to run regular weekday ridership, this is good as people are listening to public health officials. Metro is doing their best to follow what public health officials say. Increasing cleaning operations, listening to unions to better train and protect staff.
- Right now no reports of staff or riders sick on Metro.
- Watching the Bay Area.
- Q&A
 - FTA is allowing the use of funds for transit agencies. Steven - can't speak to this. Emergency declaration however will open up some funds for transit agencies. Many agencies worried about lost farebox and lost sales taxes.
 - What's your background? PR for metro, digital efforts in particular. With All that's happening is there anything about how this might impact new projects under construction? We don't know yet. This also will include our contractors and what they do. We just don't know yet.
 - How does the public engage now? le City hall has folks in tents outside. We are waiting word, but I expect an update later today. We are trying to figure out how to accommodate public testimony. Maybe Board room, speakers escorted in one at a time. Still trying to figure it out. Will post updates on twitter.
 - Note you can watch meetings online.
 - Can you email board comments? This might be outside the official process, in particular what gets archived.
 - Jessica Meany has Metro board contact info.
 - How are you going to help the ADA community? These folks are stuck? They can't take more private options. I don't know. As of now still putting full staff out, including operations ADA staff.
 - What's up with NextGen? Not sure, workshops have been cancelled. Not sure how this will impact the timeline -- don't want to come out and say timeline is delayed yet. Appetite for public input is there.
 - Does metro have an emergency plan? I think this is ongoing? Following lead of local health officials. Trying to supply additional resources for those operations who want them.
 - NextGen Webinar/Townhall March 31? I'll look into this.
 - I think this is a good opportunity for Metro to think about how they can be a resource for things like hand washing stations. What would it take to

make this happen? Like making transit free? What would you need from Feds to do this? Free is above my paygrade. There is a motion about students and the study on providing free - timeline study to be out later this spring. Metro CEO Phil Washington is excited about free + congestion pricing. We don't know how that might play out yet. Metro like other agencies does depend on the fare box, so it depends on how we can make this up.

- How can we help push for these free options? Suggest look at the budget and see where the money can come from. I think that metro will take suggestions seriously.
- Back to hand washing stations? I don't know if I can ask. Will share this back to Metro.
- Ridership is down in lots of cities, but Metro as of 4 days ago -- said this number is steady? What's the story? I think its 25-30% down right now. My office overlooks metro gold line platform -- I think ridership is still solid looking out the window only felt a little bit lighter but this was a week ago.
- Work for home policy? HQ staff has the option to apply to telecommute. Some of our staff is already working from home. Mindful of the fact operations staff can't WFH. There are fewer people in the office everyday.
- Please pass on hand sanitizer on buses and trains.
- Are you looking at business lines -- are you looking at can you actually increase service? Great q. I haven't seen crowds, but I did see a phone of Blue/A Line with a 2 car instead of a 3 car, but ridership looked ok.
- How is this going to impact regular fleet replacement? Too early to tell.
- When people do need to get around in SF -- they are biking. I think Bike Metro is kinda separate, but is there any talk about how to reduce barriers to increase bike share? I haven't heard - but that doesn't mean that isn't happening.

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Updates on Green New Deal and more

- Alissa Walker, Curbed
- [The Green New Deal for Transportation](#)
- My kids are riding their bikes in the streets today!
- We were supposed to have a SxSW panel for a general audience so did this anyways via webinar. There's a recording. Talked about what's happening now and how we can go forward. Talking about how safe practices can become permanent.

- On the phone with folks this am and they released a new transportation green new deal today.
- Highlights:
 - We do need a green new deal, and this can be viewed as a bailout for public transit.
 - They want to provide operational assistance in particular to agencies.
 - We can make a bus driver truly a green job.
 - If you've seen a lot of policies on trade-in for electric vehicles. They want to take this to trade in a vehicle for an electric bike.
 - In suburban areas, will low service, capture those folks who would but can't
 - Section on Sidewalks. ADA
 - You can look at numbers, but the polling showed the popularity of these ideas.
 - When things get back to normal, what do people want? Funds don't align with what people want.
 - Q&A
 - Comment: Better Buses, Better Cities talks a lot about how we did wrong in 2008 in particular restricting funding to not be used operations.
 - Comment 81% of State transportation funds go to car, we can use this opportunity to shift those funds.
 - How is anything we are recommending post covid19 able to be tied to housing and planning? Also childcare and access to education?
 - Working on a resource manual for how to read the City of LA budget books. This is going to be even more important now.

Other Group thoughts

- Italy has shut down biking vs Columbia has expanded Ciclovía routes
 - Was Italy just banning recreational riding?
- NYC has lowered speed limits?
- Whole foods has increased cargo ebike deliveries.
- How do these ideas work in cities of different sizes?
- Metro should suspend fare enforcement

Break out into smaller groups for discussion:

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Link to Breakout Notes

Break out Room 1

- Those able to work from home not comfortable taking transit at the moment
- Lack bike infrastructure while public transit, rideshare feels unsafe
- Parking will not be enforced and tickets will not be given, how can we replicate that for fare evasion or police enforcement on metro while people need transit more than ever as an affordable option
- Conversion of parking lanes to biking lanes to accommodate increased bikeshare
- Opportunity to make mark on transit without asking for permission
- Sidewalks too narrow to keep social distancing
- How to social distance on transit
- Housing, rent & mortgage moratorium, and opportunity for solidarity
- Keep pushing!

Breakout Room 4

- With fear of contracting virus, folks who are most reliant on transit, can't work from home will be the most impacted, metro could do more like, keeping frequency, provide handwash station, resources at transit stations
- Needs a focus on Paratransit; keep fleet clean as much as possible, and expand fleet to consider CDC 10-people or less requirement
- Fare discounts for folks who are negatively impacted, Metro needs to do more for these riders
- Needs a solution that can be done quickly, such as stop enforcement of fares or make transit free
 - Has enforcement been happening?
 - Response: increase of police presence at station prior to COVID-19 outbreak

- Need sanitation especially considering unhoused folks; also for ada folks who don't have easy access to hand washing stations
- Continue to work with service providers to offer housing services so metro doesn't continue to be the focus in housing unhoused folks on transit.
- Ways to support vulnerable community members
 - Have metro coordinate with major foodbanks, host them at major transit hubs
- There are still job openings, does metro need to look at its origins and destinations for where jobs are still hiring (e.g. manufacturing)

Breakout Room 2

- Metro what's the plan? He spoke to plans for meetings of 50 - evolving. Note Gov has suspended Brown Act. Nervous about being able to comment on the budget process. They may have an update later today.
- Eli, Move LA
- Maayan, UCLA Masters of Urban Planning - researching for ACT LA alternatives to police on transit
- Bryn, Climate Resolve.
- Leslie, Green Commuter Vanpool
- Tuls, Estelano Advisors
- Vyki, Compiler LA
- Worried about the "transit is dirty" stigma.
- Messaging play to bring folks together. If this is a pause for metro to consider that messaging.
- Stats on virus transmission, transit is lower than school/work - verify this, use it.
- Howtos: tips and tricks for staying safer
- Empowering folks on solutions.
- Metro publishes protocols for cleaning. They use EPA approved disinfectants - they may already have a page published. We could use this.
- Metro has an employee transportation coordinator meeting. This is a great chance to get messaging and posters out. This is an underutilized communication channel. However end of month meeting was already cancelled. Could/should we ask for these to be moved online?
- Howto: hold the wire? Can we have paper towels to pull these without skin contact.
- Lifehacks for transit.
- More sanitation stuff onboard.

Break Out 3

- Re-thinking resiliency - tax based might be an issue: rethink funding
- Improving sanitation issues - and keep those practices as future changes
- Use “time-off” for working groups and improve conversations
- Metro can provide jobs if when we are rebounding economically
- Government has a lot on their hands and we can take this time to talk to our community and host conversations and strategies to improve service in the future
- Engage community conversations meetings virtually to continue conversation while folks are at home

Suggested Action Items

- Please provide comments on the letter legislature sent to Governor & Chief Justice re evictions/foreclosures, specifically, are we missing something? ([Letter to Governor/Chief Justice](#))
- Also, Transportation for America has a sign-on letter asking Congress to provide transit agencies with \$13B in immediate direct financial assistance to ensure the continuation of safe and reliable service during the coronavirus situation.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdtlqgcucncKAzmX70DuIE0a4VIPx22SI2UuSDsr4chFhgy_A/viewform