



Joint Labor-Management Committee – Commute Options & Parking (JLMC-COP) COMMITTEE REPORT 21-07

Date: December 6, 2021

To: JLMC-COP

From: Staff

Subject: Commuter Support Initiatives

JLMC-COP MEMBERS:

Employee Organizations

Carmen Hayes-Walker, AFSCME, Chair Charles Leone, SEIU, First Provisional Chair Victor Gordo, LIUNA Scott Harrelson, LAPCOA

Management

Jay Kim, LADOT, Vice-Chair Valerie Melloff, GSD, Second Provisional Chair Paula Dayes, Personnel Patricia Huber, CAO

RECOMMENDATION:

That the JLMC-COP: (a) approve a draft Letter of Agreement to increase the transit subsidy to \$100 for a one-year period following its effective date and request that the Personnel Department, on behalf of the JLMC-COP, submit the Letter of Agreement to the City Council for approval; and (b) approve the proposed draft engagement/promotion campaign elements as provided in this report.

DISCUSSION:

A. Background

- At its April 1, 2021 meeting, the JLMC-COP reviewed and provided feedback on a project plan update regarding the work being performed by the City's transportation benefits consultant, Steer Davies & Gleave, Inc. (Steer). At that meeting, staff indicated the project plan was being updated slightly in light of changes that had occurred since the project plan was originally presented to the JLMC-COP on September 1, 2020, specifically with respect to a greater focus on issues arising due to the impact of the COVID pandemic on the City's workforce.
- At its June 10, 2021 meeting, the JLMC-COP established an Ad Hoc Interim Commuter Support Subcommittee (Ad Hoc Subcommittee) to work with staff and Steer to propose interim changes to COMMUTEwell transportation benefits which would assist the City's workforce in transitioning to a greater presence at City worksites.
- On July 22, 2021, the Ad Hoc Subcommittee met to consider a range of options developed by staff and Steer. The Ad Hoc Subcommittee approved moving these options forward to the JLMC-COP.

 On September 15, 2021, the JLMC-COP approved recommendations from staff and the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to (a) move forward with proposed interim changes to COMMUTEwell transportation benefits in order to assist the City's workforce in transitioning to a greater presence at City worksites; and (b) draft proposed language for a modification to the City's Special MOU for those measures requiring codification within the City's Special Memorandum on Commute Options and Parking (Special MOU).

Progress on the measures approved by the JLMC-COP at its September 15, 2021 meeting has been slowed somewhat due to staffing challenges, including the departure of Jenny M. Yau from the Employee Benefits Division as a result of promotion.

B. Transportation Benefit Changes

Staff, Steer and the Ad Hoc Subcommittee developed a proposed set of interim measures, subsequently adopted by the JLMC-COP, to better support City employee needs as they transition to a greater presence at City worksites. Particular focus is being paid to assisting employees in the Civic Center area where parking options and capacity are limited. This report focuses on those items identified as more readily actionable in the prior report. A summary of the adopted interim measures is provided as follows:

INTERIM MEASURES		
Measure	Timeline	MOU Revision Required
Temporarily increase monthly transit subsidy to \$100	Two months	Yes
Engagement/Promotion - campaign supporting employees		No
returning to City worksites	Upon JLMC-COP approval	
Engagement/Promotion - create/promote carpool matching		No
resources	Upon JLMC-COP approval	
Engagement/Promotion - promote rewards for forming		No
carpools/vanpools	Upon JLMC-COP approval	
Engagement/Promotion - remove residential proximity		No
requirement	Implemented	
Carpool Parking Reservation Pilot	Two months	No

Staff will now review the status of these measures.

(1) Temporarily Increase Monthly Transit Subsidy to \$100

A temporary, one-year increase to the monthly transit subsidy to \$100 requires a modification of the Special MOU. A draft Letter of Agreement to effect this change is provided as **Attachment A**.

<u>Financial Review</u> - At the JLMC-COP's September 15 meeting, discussion took place regarding the financial impacts of increasing the transit reimbursement from \$50 to \$100. In the interim, EBD

finalized the annual financial review of the status of the City's Ridesharing Trust Fund for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21. As of June 30, 2021, net of all recorded and accrued items, assets in the Ridesharing Trust Fund totaled \$4,285,030. This compares to a net balance of \$3,541,389 at the end of FY 2019-20, or an increase of \$743,641 to the net balance. The increase in the net balance is attributable in large part to an approximately 90% pandemic-related reduction in transit subsidy expenditures compared to pre-pandemic levels (although other unusual factors affected the net balance, including reduction in parking revenue, increased van lease costs, and new consulting costs).

The following chart compares pre-pandemic transit utilization/costs with a range of potential post-pandemic outcomes. Pre-pandemic utilization was approximately 2,000 transit subsidy recipients monthly. Current utilization is approximately 200. Recently, as part of the budget development process for FY 2022-23, staff projected that transit utilization would average 1,100 in FY 2022-23, or 55% of pre-pandemic levels, given that comfort with use of public transportation may be slow to return. However, as the chart indicates, even if utilization were to immediately return to pre-pandemic levels for a one-year period, the net additional cost of \$1.2 million would still easily be absorbed by not only pre-pandemic surplus amounts but current fiscal-year surplus amounts which are continuing to accumulate.



The draft Letter of Agreement includes a provision allowing the JLMC-COP to take an action to extend the increase in the transit subsidy increase beyond the initial one-year period by its own action without further modification to the Special MOU. This increase, however, would be subject to completion of a future financial review with respect to the financial impact of the extension on the Rideshare Trust Fund.

Staff recommends that the JLMC-COP approve the draft Letter of Agreement to increase the transit subsidy to \$100 for a one-year period following its effective date and request that the Personnel Department, on behalf of the JLMC-COP, submit the Letter of Agreement to the City Council for approval.

(2) Engagement/Promotion Initiatives:

- Develop Engagement Campaign
- Promote Carpool Matching Resources
- Provide Rewards for Forming Carpools/Vanpools
- Eliminate Carpool Residency Requirements

Staff and Steer have collaborated in drafting materials for a proposed engagement campaign to accomplish the following objectives:

- ➤ Provide more information to employees regarding parking options and resources, with a particular focus on parking resources applicable to the downtown Civil Center.
- > Promote carpool and vanpool formation by creating a custom carpool/vanpool ride match tool using LA Metro's online ride-matching service.
- Establish rewards for promoting ridesharing.
- ➤ Promote existing COMMUTEwell resources and transportation benefits, including the transit reimbursement/transit match programs, tax-advantaged transit and parking accounts, vanpool program, bike/walk subsidy, bike cages, LA Metro Rewards program, and other resources.

The campaign is branded as, "Refresh Your Commute." This branding was chosen to be consistent with the concept that many employees will need to reengage with their commuting options and choices given the long disruption to prior commuting patterns resulting from the pandemic.

The draft webpage, resource guide, and informational video for the campaign are provided as **Attachment B**. Staff and Steer will also provide a live demonstration of the video at the JLMC-COP meeting. Staff recommends that the JLMC-COP approve the proposed draft engagement/promotion campaign elements as provided in this report. Upon adoption, these resources will be launched to City employees immediately. Removal of the carpool residential proximity requirement has already been implemented.

(3) Carpool Pilot

Staff and Steer are finalizing elements of the Carpool Pilot Program (Carpool Pilot). As previously discussed with the JLMC-COP, staff and Steer identified the Personnel Department's Medical Services Division parking garage as an optimal candidate for a pilot due to its manageable size. Steer conducted research into several application/software-based systems for reserving and managing the carpool spaces and, in collaboration with staff, continues to review the feasibility and administrative requirements to utilize these. Using an application/software-based system is

preferable because it would provide an excellent learning opportunity for possibly expanding beyond the Carpool Pilot into other parking facilities and better track historic and real-time parking usage. However, if administrative obstacles take too long to resolve, staff will move forward with a manual approach until such time as the application/software-based option can be implemented.

Approximately five spaces will be designated for the Carpool Pilot. These spaces will be identified with whatever signage may be required depending on the use of an application/software-based system or manual approach. Staff will provide further updates to the JLMC-COP at its next meeting.

Submitted by:	
	Steven Montagna, Chief Personnel Analyst

JOINT LABOR-MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ON COMMUTE OPTIONS AND PARKING LETTER OF AGREEMENT Transit Subsidy Incentive

This Letter of Agreement ("LOA") is entered into between the City of Los Angeles ("City") management and employee organization representatives of the City's Joint Labor-Management Committee on Commute Options and Parking (JLMC-COP).

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Special Memorandum of Understanding Regarding City Employee Parking and Commute Options ("Special Parking MOU"), Article 6, City employees using public transportation, or bicyclists/walkers, shall receive reimbursement of fifty dollars (\$50) per month;

WHEREAS, as a consequence of COVID-19 and its related changes to employee commuting preferences and practices, many City employees who are returning from teleworking may be reconsidering public transportation or bicycling/walking as telecommuting modes;

WHEREAS, utilization of public transportation was reduced sharply as a consequence of COVID-19 and remains at low levels;

WHEREAS, the JLMC-COP, in order to best align the transportation reward structure with the needs of City employees, has worked with the Personnel Department to develop a campaign focused on providing educational resources to employees regarding parking and commute option, and finds that increasing the transit reimbursement amount for a temporary period of time would be a valuable component of these engagement efforts;

WHEREAS, the JLMC-COP has determined that the one-year costs of the increased transit reimbursement amount can be absorbed by surplus amounts within the City's Rideshare Trust Fund;

NOW THEREFORE, the undersigned parties agree to the following provisions:

- 1. The JLMC-COP agrees to an increase of the transit reimbursement amount from \$50 to \$100 for a one-year period beginning with the effective date of approval of this change within the Special MOU.
- 2. The JLMC-COP agrees that the \$100 amount may be extended beyond the one-year period by formal approval of the JLMC-COP without further amendment of the Special MOU, subject to consideration of an additional financial review prepared by the Personnel Department with respect to the financial impact of the extension on the Rideshare Trust Fund, and approval of the change consistent with the JLMC-COP's bylaws.

For Employee Organizations Members: Date	For Management Members: Date
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees	Personnel Department
and Manicipal Employees	
Service Employees International Union	City Administrative Officer
Los Angeles Police Command Officers Association	General Services Department
Laborer's International Union of North America (LIUNA)	Department of Transportation
Los Angeles Professional Managers' Association (LAPMA)	
	Approved
	City Attorney's Office

Attachment B

Resource Guide

efresh your commute



The Personnel Department's COMMUTEwell Program issues parking permits and manages transportation benefits for City employees. We recognize the challenges many of our employees face when thinking about commuting to City worksites, particularly in the Civic Center area. We hope this information is helpful as you make future commuting plans.

- Parking COMMUTEwell manages multiple waiting lists for parking and issues permits in the priority order
 as established in the City's Special Memorandum on Commute Options and Parking (Special MOU).
 Employees commuting to the downtown area and for whom City-issued parking is not available may visit
 LACOMMUTEwell.com/CommuteOptions for information regarding non-City parking lots.
- Carpool Program Share a car with another City employee and reduce your transportation costs. You can also apply for a carpool parking permit at a reduced rate.
- Vanpool Program Lower your transportation costs and share driving responsibilities with colleagues while saving on wear and tear on your personal vehicle! The Vanpool Program includes a City-provided van, fuel, insurance and maintenance.
- Walk/Bike to Work Program Walk or bike to work while earning up to \$50 per month.
- Transit Spending Account (TSA) Set aside up to \$280 per month on a pre-tax basis to pay for your transit expenses and receive a transit match of up to \$50 per month.
- Transit Subsidy Reimbursement Program Receive a non-taxable subsidy of up to \$50 per month on your transit expenses.



Transportation Options

There are several transportation options that will get you where you want to go, from trains and buses to ridesharing and walking or biking. Popular options include:



Metro Bus



Metro Bike Share



Biking



Van/Carpool



Metro Rail



Metrolink



Walking



Metro Micro



Trip Planning Resources

There are several transportation options that will get you where you want to go, from trains and buses to ridesharing and walking or biking. Popular options include:

Ridematching Trip Planning Fare Payment

Helps you find a carpool or vanpool partner Find the best route from your house to work Cashless payments on your phone



RideMatch.Info

Search among City of LA colleagues or the greater Metro area.



Google Maps

Select from driving, transit, walking or biking options.



LA Mobile

Manage your DASH or Commuter Express payments.



Waze Carpool

Dynamic matching to help you find a partner when you need one.



Transit App

Metro's official app to get real time transit information and step by step instructions.



Metrolink App

Purchase, activate, and manage your Metrolink tickets via your phone.

More information: LACOMMUTEwell.com/CommuteOptions Email: LACOMMUTEwell@lacity.org

Postcard

efresh your commute

The City of Los Angeles offers a variety of transportation benefits to eligible City employees through the Personnel Department's COMMUTEwell Program.

For more information about your commute options and helpful resources, visit **LACOMMUTEwell.com/CommuteOptions**









We're here to help you Refresh Your Commute!Parking is becoming a limited resource. However, there are other ways to get to work. Find out more!

Your COMMUTEwell benefits:

Parking

On a parking waitlist? Go to our website for non-City parking options.

Transit Spending Account Program (TSA) €

Transit Reimbursement Program

Up to \$280 per month on a pre-tax for transit expenses.

Carpool Program

Get a priority carpool permit at reduced rates.

New! We've relaxed the proximity requirement!

Vanpool Program

Share in the cost of a City-provided van.

New! Head to our website for help finding a carpool or vanpool partner

Bike/Walk to Work Program

Earn \$50 per month for biking or walking.

Learn more or sign up on: LACOMMUTEwell.com/CommuteOptions

Get around LA by:

M Metro Bus & Rail

DASH DASH Bus

Metrolink

Metro Micro

And more!

Need help planning your commute?

Check out the website for a list of handy trip planning apps.



Webpage Content

1 Refresh Your Commute Webpage

Navigation

How employees can navigate to the page:

- LACOMMUTEwell.com/CommuteOptions
- Commute Options tab on top menu bar
- Banner from homepage
- Link from email and other communications

steer

Webpage Structure

Banner/Video/Announcements/Updates

The Personnel Department's COMMUTEwell Program issues parking permits and manages transportation benefits for the City's civilian and sworn Police/Fire employees (excluding employees of the Los Angeles World Airports, Harbor Department, and Department of Water and Power, each of which offers its own transportation benefit programs). We recognize the challenges many of our employees face when thinking about commuting to City worksites, particularly in the Civic Center area. We've worked with the City's Joint Labor-Management Committee on Commute Options and Parking (JLMC-COP) to enhance our resources and provide more information regarding parking and transportation options. We hope this information is helpful as you make future commuting plans.



To learn more about your parking options, click the icon to the left

Need help planning your commute trip? Check out one of these apps:

Ridematching

Helps you find a carpool or vanpool partner



RideMatch.Info
Search among City
of LA colleagues
or the greater
Metro area.



Waze Carpool
Dynamic matching
to help you find a
partner when you
need one.

Trip Planning

Find the best route from your house to work



Google MapsSelect from driving, transit, walking or biking options.



Transit App
Metro's official app to
get real time transit
information and step
by step instructions.



Moovit App
Live directions to guide
you through your
transit journey.

Fare Payment

Cashless payments on your phone



LA Mobile Manage your DASH or Commuter Express payments



Metrolink App
Purchase, activate,
and manage your
Metrolink tickets
via your phone.



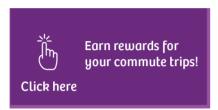
Guaranteed Ride Home

For employees commuting by means other than driving alone, Metro's Regional Guaranteed Ride Home Program provides a safety net, which allows employees to rideshare to work without the worry of getting stranded at work due to illness, unexpected overtime or other emergency.

In the event of a valid emergency, GRH ensures that ridesharing employees will be reimbursed up to two (2) times per fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) for a taxi ride, a ride from a transportation network company (e.g., Uber or Lyft), carsharing company, rental car or transit fare.

For more information, refer to the Metro Guaranteed Ride Home Program.

Metro Rewards



The Metro Rewards program recognizes eligible rideshare commuters with a chance to win gift cards and Metro passes on a monthly basis. The more you rideshare, the more chances to win. Simply register an account on Ridematch.info and log your alternative commute trips!

We're here you help!



Your Commute Options



COMMUTEwell issues permits on a space-available basis and in the priority order established in the City's Special Memorandum on Commute Options and Parking (Special MOU). Effective May 12, 2021, all names previously placed on COMMUTEwell waiting lists were removed and employees given the opportunity to place themselves onto our refreshed lists. If you wish to apply to be on a waitlist, please submit your name via our new online self-reporting tool here.

Please note that City parking capacity continues to be limited in the downtown/Civic Center area. However, you may have options with other nearby parking facilities (see below).

For more information about City parking, please visit our Parking Page for more information.

Non-City Parking Options

Check out the below resources to help you learn more about non-City parking options in Downtown LA:



Interactive map which shows the location of available parking in Downtown LA and their prices. You can sort by daily, monthly, or reserve parking and filter by amenities such as handicap spaces or EV charging.



Type in your destination and arrive/departure times to find a list of nearby parking lots and the distance from your destination.



This application shows users their parking options and also lets you pay meters and remembers your parking location. It can also send you reminders to move your car.

Parking Spending Account (PSA)

To help manage your parking costs, remember that City employees who park at a non-City owned/leased lot may enroll in the PSA program to set aside pre-tax dollars (up to \$280 per month for calendar year 2022) to use towards parking expenses. You may enroll or access your account and make changes at any time. The PSA program is separate from City-issued parking. PSA funds cannot be used to pay for City-issued parking.

Note: PSA accounts are also separate from Transit Spending Accounts, which may only be used for transit-related expenses.

For more information about the PSA, click here.



Public transportation continues to be an important resource for commuters. To help support those who currently use or may be considering public transportation, the JLMC-COP are in the process of temporarily doubling the monthly transit match/reimbursement amount from \$50 to \$100. Certain administrative actions are required to make this effective — the approximate effective date is February or March, 2022. Please check our website for updates. The transit reimbursement increase will be in effect for one year past its initial effective date.

In addition, the COMMUTEwell Program continues to offer City employees two approaches for reducing the net costs of using public transportation for commuting:

- Transit Spending Account (TSA): You can set aside up to \$280 per month in pre-tax dollars toward the cost of eligible transit expenses, such as bus passes, train tickets, and other transit media, allowing you to further reduce your out-of-pocket costs. The City provides a "transit match" of up to \$50 into your TSA based on how much you contribute (this amount will increase to \$100 upon the effective date of the temporary increase).
 For more information about the TSA, click here.
- Employee Transit Subsidy Reimbursement Program: Employees not using a TSA have the option of submitting their transit expenses for reimbursement of up to \$50 (this amount will increase to \$100 upon the effective date of the temporary increase).
 For more information about the Transit Subsidy Reimbursement, including the form and reimbursement schedule, click here.

Helpful Transit Resources



*A TAP card is a durable plastic card with a smart chip that you pre-pay and then "tap" to purchase fares for and ride on participating public transportation vehicles, such as busses, shuttles, and light rail.



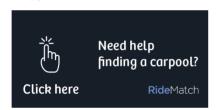
We've made it easier for those considering carpooling. We've partnered with LA Metro to create a custom <u>ride matching tool</u> to help you find other employees to share your commute. We've also relaxed our residential proximity requirement for carpool partners so it's easier to carpool with someone who may not necessarily live nearby but is on your commuting route.

Remember – carpoolers are higher up the priority list when City parking spaces are available, and they also pay lower parking fees than those paid by employees driving alone.

A carpool is typically a group of two to four individuals who live nearby and commute to work together in a personal vehicle. The carpool partners agree amongst themselves on driving duties, costs, schedules, and routes.

For more information about the City's Carpool Programs, including Carpool Parking Rules and Parking Application, click here.

Helpful resources:





Vanpools are another way to commute and are also prioritized for parking at City facilities. Forming a vanpool can be more challenging than forming a carpool because more individuals must participate. The smallest vans available require six members (the maximum is twelve). DWP employees, Airport/Harbor Department, contract employees, as well as those not associated with the City of Los Angeles are eligible to participate.

A vanpool is a formal group of six or more individuals who commute together via a leased vehicle and pay a monthly vanpool fee. The fee covers the cost of insurance, maintenance, and fuel. The Primary Driver whose responsibility includes driving and storing the vans and does not pay the monthly vanpool fee.

For more information about the City's Vanpool Programs, including a list of current vans, routes, and fares, click here.



Helpful resources:





Biking or walking to work is not only a great form of exercise, it also makes you eligible for our bike/walk match of \$50 (this amount will increase to \$100 upon the effective date of the temporary increase).

Certain City facilities (City Hall East and Figueroa Plaza) provide showers and lockers for those biking to work. Also, the City has recently created a new bike cage at City Hall with 35 bike stations. To determine locker availability, call (213) 978-1593.

For more information about the Bike/Walk to Work Program, including a list of bike amenities, click here.

Helpful resources:

- Bike Safety Classes
- Bike Safety Guidebook
- Bike Pocket Guide
- Metro Bikeshare
- Metro Bike Map
- Metro Bike Locker Registration

Transit Updates

Changes are happening! Check back here for updates regarding service changes or when new mobility options become available!

- Metro NextGen Bus Initiative Bus service changes to increase service frequency
- <u>DASH Service Expansion</u> Improvements to existing DASH routes and the addition of new routes.
- Metro Micro new on-demand rideshare service connecting riders to nearby transit stations.
 Available in Watts/Compton, LAX/Inglewood, North Hollywood/Burbank,
 Altadena/Pasadena/Sierra Madre, El Monte, Highland Park/Eagle Rock/Glendale, Northwest
 San Fernando Valley, and coming soon to UCLA/Westwood/VA Medical Center. \$1 per ride.



Testimonials

This month's Commuter of the Quarter is....



"I thought taking the bus once a week was going to be more challenging and time-consuming. But actually, I find myself enjoying the extra time I have sitting in the bus; I listen to a podcast or read the news. I am glad I am trying it out, and I am proud I am helping my city become more sustainable."

-Jane Doe

Video Deck

Efresh your commute

With COMMUTEwell

Refresh your Commute

COMMUTEWell

Options. Value. Convenience.

In this video we provide a COMMUTEwell update regarding your transportation options and benefits

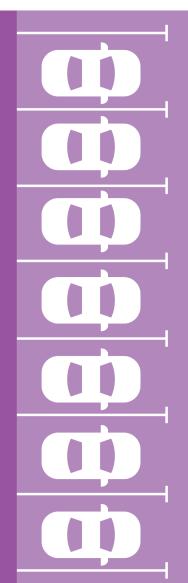
What is COMMUTEwell?

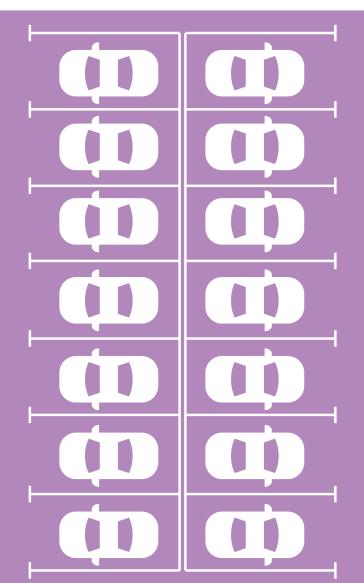
The City of Los Angeles employee transportation benefits program brought to you by the Personnel Department

- Parking permits
- Transportation benefits
- Commute options



Commuting Challenges





Parking is a limited resource

We are working to improve commute options for employees



Metro Trains and Bus

Commuter Express Bus



Metrolink Train

COMMUTEwell

Options. Value. Convenience.



Carpool



Vanpool





Walking



Biking





Metro Bike Share

Metro Micro







Set aside up to \$280 per month pre-tax to pay for your transportation expenses



Parking Spending Account (TSA)

Set aside up to \$280 per month pre-tax to pay for your parking costs at non-city owned lots



Save money on your transit expenses



Share a car with another City employee and apply for a discounted carpool parking permit



Includes a City-provided van, fuel, insurance and maintenance at a subsidized fee



Walk or bike to work and earn up to \$50 per month

Transit Spending Account (TSA)



Transit Subsidy Reimbursement Program



Carpool Program



Parking Spending Account (PSA)



Vanpool Program



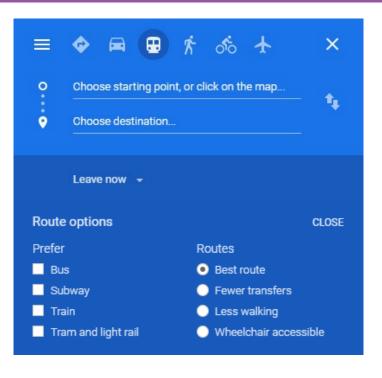
Bike/Walk to Work Program



Sign up on LACOMMUTEwell.com!

Check out these resources to explore your options, find the best route, and pay on the go!





Check out these resources to explore your options, find the best route, and pay on the go!



The better way to ride.

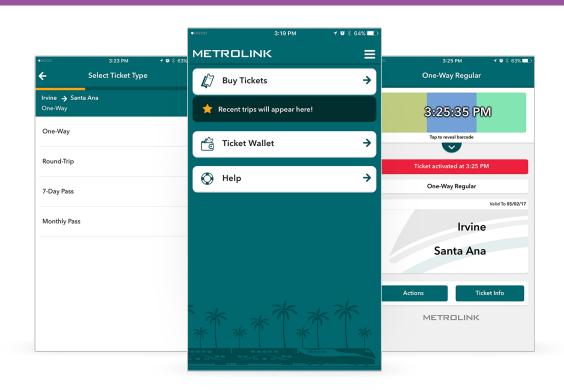
Meet *Transit*. Metro's new official app.







Check out these resources to explore your options, find the best route, and pay on the go!





Check out these resources to explore your options, find the best route, and pay on the go!

Parking Downtown?

Visit <u>LACOMMUTEwell.com/CommuteOptions</u> for information regarding non-City parking lots.

Check out these resources to explore your options, find the best route, and pay on the go!



Visit LACOMMUTEwell.com/CommuteOptions to get going today!

COMMUTEwell

Options. Value. Convenience.

COMMUTEWell

Options. Value. Convenience.