



## Joint Labor-Management Committee – Commute Options & Parking (JLMC-COP) **COMMITTEE REPORT 22-05**

Date: February 23, 2022

To: JLMC-COP

From: Staff

Subject: Proposed 2022 Development Plan for Transportation Benefit and Special MOU Redesign

### 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 the proposed 2022 development plan for transportation benefits and Special MOU redesign, and (b) create an Ad Hoc Subcommittee to work with staff in bringing recommended benefit design and Special MOU policy positions.

### **DISCUSSION:**

#### **A. Background**

Following is a review of important actions in 2021 regarding the JLMC-COP's ongoing work of redesigning the COMMUTEwell Program's transportation benefit and revising the City's Special Memorandum on Commute Options & Parking (Special MOU):

- 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), with respect to supporting redesign of the City's transportation benefits and Special MOU. At that meeting, staff indicated the project plan was being updated 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).
- On **December 6, 2021**, the JLMC-COP (a) approved a draft Letter of Agreement (LOA) to increase the transit subsidy to \$100 for a one-year period following its effective date and requested that the Personnel Department, on behalf of the JLMC-COP, submit the Letter of Agreement to the City Council for approval; and (b) approved proposed engagement/promotion campaign elements for issuance to City employees.

## **B. Initiatives Updates, Project Planning, and Staffing Changes**

### **(1) Updates on Previously Approved Initiatives**

The engagement and support materials approved by the JLMC-COP at its December 6, 2021 meeting were published on the LACOMMUTEwell.com website shortly after the meeting date. More active promotion, including a Citywide email and postcard mailing to employee homes, was postponed to the beginning of February due to concerns about promoting ridesharing at the same time the Omicron variant was peaking.

All signatures have been obtained for the LOA increasing the transit subsidy to \$100 for a one-year period. The LOA is being transmitted to City Council and is expected to subsequently be referred to the Personnel and Animal Welfare (PAAW) Committee. In addition, staff has been working with Steer on implementing a pilot shared carpool space program at the Personnel Department's Medical Services Division (MSD) lot. A software firm has been identified to provide a parking reservation tool for carpool members sharing the spaces. Implementation is tentatively anticipated for March 2022.

### **(2) 2022 Project Plan**

Staff is now turning its focus to the next phase of development for redesign of the City's transportation benefits as reflected in the Special Parking MOU. As the JLMC-COP is aware, this initiative has been impacted by the City's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since March 2020, a significant percentage of City employees have been working predominantly by telecommuting. This significantly altered City employee commuting patterns, needs and preferences relative to telecommuting and the use of public transportation.

Because many employees with parking permits were only rarely coming to City worksites, parking capacity was available for those employees required to report to City worksites but who lacked parking permits. Consequently, on March 18, 2020, General Services Department (GSD) implemented a temporary parking policy allowing City employees without permits to park at certain facilities using their City-issued identification badge. GSD monitors all parking levels daily to ensure there are spaces to accommodate employees with permits.

Throughout the pandemic City departments have been contemplating, and in some cases slowly implementing, a greater return of City employees to worksites. Parking demand is growing as employees without permits anticipate a reduction in excess capacity resulting from employees with permits returning to worksites. Presently the City's parking facilities for worksite locations with large concentrations of City employees have extensive parking waiting lists. Many of these employees have been parking at City facilities based on the interim GSD policy.

Many City employees seeking parking directly at their work facilities are doing so due to safety concerns in the immediate areas around their work facilities. With limited parking capacity available on the premises of key work facilities, the JLMC-COP's and staff's recent focus has been on designing new support resources, including the recently implemented online tools that help employees search for parking in the downtown area or search for potential City employee carpool partners using a custom tool developed in partnership with LA Metro.

Staff's focus in 2022 is on completing the best practice review and recommendations from the City's consultants at Steer Davies & Gleave, Inc. (Steer) and integrating those recommendations, as appropriate and approved, into proposed revisions to the City's Special MOU. Staff has already launched an internal review and development process to address fundamental building blocks of the Special MOU, including program mission, eligibility, and jurisdiction. In addition, this development process will also address three primary benefit-related topics contained within the Special MOU. Staff is working closely with Steer on these topics, as the City's analysis will necessarily need to incorporate consideration of best practice options and key learnings from other comparable governmental agencies. The three primary benefit topics include the following:

- (a) **Parking Preferences, Eligibility and Prioritization** – This includes review of the prioritization of parking for the eligible sub-populations of employees included in the Special Parking MOU, drawing in best practice research from other comparable organizations while addressing the City's unique organizational constructs.
- (b) **Optimizing Efficiency in Allocation of Parking Resources** – This includes a review of how parking access is integrated with existing parking resources and how to optimize efficiency in how parking resources are utilized, specifically with respect to (a) identifying opportunities and options for expanding the use of shared parking spaces and/or (b) integrating greater utilization of a daily parking benefit model. Both of these serve to maximize the efficiency of available parking resources but will need to take into consideration how that benefit construction can fit into the legacy design of parking permit allocation and distribution. This review and resulting policy proposals will further

need to address variation within the City's existing parking facilities and available parking technology resources. Finally, this review will incorporate best practice research from other comparable organizations while addressing the City's unique organizational constructs.

- (c) **Ridesharing Incentives** – This includes a review of optimal plan design features for offering employer-based ridesharing incentives, specifically addressing some of the complexities raised by aligning the City's incentives with the broad range of regional transportation authorities and resources, and creating greater flexibility for employees in utilizing a variety of transportation modes, media, and combined incentives for their commuting needs. This review would also incorporate best practice research from other comparable organizations while addressing the City's unique organizational constructs.

As the issues will likely involve considerable discussion, exploration of alternatives, and research, staff recommends that the JLMC-COP establish an Ad Hoc Committee to work with staff in bringing recommended benefit design and Special MOU policy positions to the full JLMC-COP. Due to the broad and diverse number of topics needing to be addressed, staff proposes establishing a regular meeting schedule for the Ad Hoc Committee with an early focus on prioritized policy matters. Further, staff proposes bringing priority elements to the full JLMC-COP incrementally over the course of 2022 in the event the JLMC-COP finds value in executing interim Letters of Agreement to help deliver key improvements to City employees expeditiously.

Staff recommends that the JLMC-COP (a) approve the proposed 2022 development plan for transportation benefits and Special MOU redesign, and (b) create an Ad Hoc Subcommittee to work with staff in bringing recommended benefit design and Special MOU policy positions.

### (3) Staffing Changes

The Personnel Department is committed to utilizing proactive strategies to support its key Employee Benefits Division (EBD) programs, including the COMMUTEwell Program. The Personnel Department has been actively engaged with succession planning for several key EBD leadership positions. These positions include EBD's Chief Personnel Analyst (which will become vacant on April 29, 2022 when incumbent Steven Montagna retires); and the Senior Benefits Analyst II position which recently became vacant when Jenny M. Yau departed, and which oversees the COMMUTEwell Program, Wellness Program, Pension Savings Plan, and other EBD functions.

First, with respect to Ms. Yau's position, as of January 31, 2022, that position has been filled by Senior Personnel Analyst II Daniel Powell. Mr. Powell has assumed a key leadership role for the COMMUTEwell Program.

Second, with respect to the EBD Chief's position, the Personnel Department is in the process of executing a succession plan involving (a) the anticipated appointment of a successor EBD Chief, which is expected to occur by mid-March 2022, and (b) side-by-side training of the successor EBD

Chief by the incumbent between the appointment date and April 2022. This training will support a smooth transition of EBD duties, including those related to the COMMUTEwell Program. In addition, the COMMUTEwell Program will continue to be supported by its other staff positions, as well as Steer.



Submitted by:

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Steven Montagna, Chief Personnel Analyst