



Metro®

Vermont Transit Corridor Community Engagement Program

Documentation Report
March 2025

Concepts Under Study





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INTRODUCTION

The Vermont Transit Corridor (VTC) project aims to enhance public transportation along a 12.4-mile stretch between Sunset Boulevard and 120th Street. This route is the busiest north-south bus corridor in Los Angeles County—with approximately 38,000 weekday boardings—and serves communities that rely heavily on public transit. The project will deliver long-awaited improvements in travel time, reliability, and customer experience, while enhancing access to numerous local bus lines, Metro Rail lines, and major activity centers.

Metro has prioritized robust community engagement by focusing on residents' needs and ensuring their voices are heard. This commitment is reflected in several key actions:

Actively Soliciting Community Feedback: Metro offers multiple opportunities for residents to share input on Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and rail alternatives through various channels.

- **Public Meetings & Workshops:** Seventeen public meetings have been held, including three Equity and Cultural Needs Workshops (February 2024) and seven interactive Station Design Workshops (May–June 2024), engaging over 700 participants and collecting 900 feedback responses.
- **Culturally Competent Outreach:** To ensure accessibility and inclusivity, outreach materials are available in Armenian, Braille, English, Kiche, Korean, Spanish, Thai, and Zapotec.
- **Community-Based Partnership Program:** Metro collaborates with 40 hyper-local community-based and faith-based organizations to expand outreach, gather insights, and build trust within the community.
- **Project Updates:** Regular communications are provided through canvassing, community meetings, newsletters, website updates, social media, and email notifications.
- **Prioritizing Transparency and Accessibility:** Metro is committed to providing clear, accessible information to all community members, fostering trust and informed decision-making.
- **Project Briefings:** Engagements have been conducted with City Council Districts 1, 8, 9, 10, 13, and 15, as well as with local institutions, business associations, and advocacy groups. This comprehensive approach has resulted in significant community engagement.

As of March 2025, the VTC project has engaged more than 25,000 individuals through its various outreach activities. By integrating equity into all outreach efforts, Metro is building a foundation of trust and transparency that will extend well beyond the project's lifecycle.



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Metro completed two studies in 2017 and 2019 to establish the need for transit improvements along this heavily utilized corridor. Both studies identified Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and rail alternatives that could provide faster, more reliable service along Vermont Avenue.

In November 2021, Metro launched a pre-environmental public outreach and community-based organization (CBO) engagement program as part of the Metro Equity Platform Framework. This initiative engaged community partners and

stakeholders to gather feedback on potential transit improvements, including both BRT and rail options.

This grassroots planning approach laid a solid foundation for the project's future and led to the Metro Board's action in September 2022 to advance improvements to existing bus service in three phases:

Phase 1: Near-Term Bus Service Improvements (Early 2025)

- As part of the Bus Speed and Reliability Program, this phase includes the installation of bus-only lanes in the northern and southern segments of the corridor.
- Parking restrictions along Vermont Avenue between Sunset and Wilshire will be adjusted: the current 4–7 PM weekday restrictions will change to 3–7 PM; areas with existing 7–9 AM restrictions will be extended to 7–10 AM; and new 7–10 AM restrictions will be implemented in areas currently without morning limits.

Phase 2: Medium-Term Bus Rapid Transit (Targeted for Completion by 2028)

- A high-quality BRT system is planned that will be faster, more reliable, and more convenient.
- The system aims to offer premium north–south transit service connecting to key destinations, thereby improving access to jobs, education, and essential services.
- It will also strengthen links to the regional transportation network and address the area's growing transit needs.

Phase 3: Long-Term Rail Options

- This phase will explore rail alternatives, pending funding availability.

Additional public meetings and project updates have provided further opportunities for feedback before the Metro Board approves the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). Through ongoing collaboration and input, the Vermont Transit Corridor project will deliver high-quality transit improvements that create a more efficient, equitable, and sustainable transportation system for communities that need it most.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The Vermont Transit Corridor project is vital for Los Angeles County, addressing a critical need for improved public transportation along one of the region's busiest bus routes, which currently serves 38,000 weekday riders. This project offers a much-needed upgrade to an overburdened system and directly supports Metro's mission to provide safe, reliable access to essential destinations such as jobs, schools, healthy food, and healthcare. Public transit is especially crucial for communities along the corridor, particularly for those without personal vehicles, low-income households, children, individuals with disabilities, and older adults.

Investing in the Vermont Corridor is fundamentally an equity issue. Improved transit options, including Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and eventual rail, will offer faster, more reliable mobility and expand access to employment, community resources, medical care, and recreational opportunities. Ultimately, this investment will enhance the lives of countless residents along the corridor and throughout Los Angeles County.

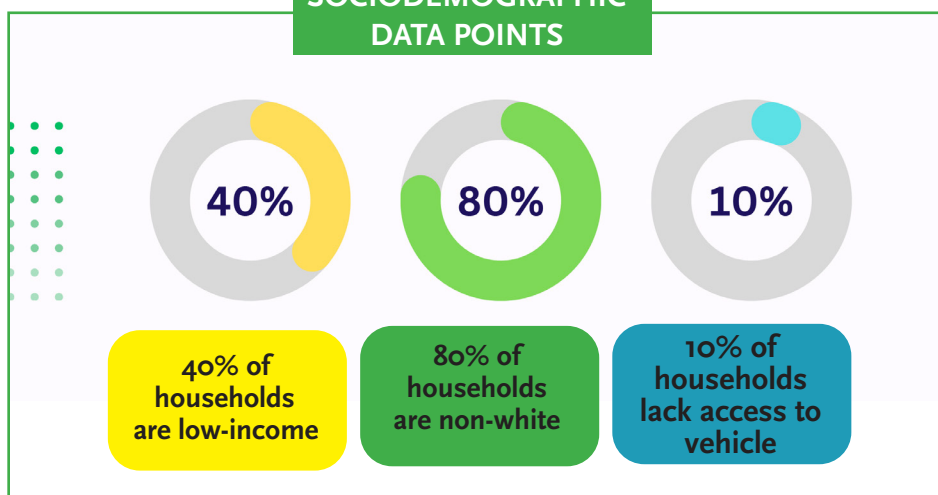
SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC DATA POINTS

All communities along the corridor are considered Equity-Focused Communities (EFCs) due to their socioeconomic characteristics: over 40% of households are low-income (earning less than \$35,000 annually), 80% are nonwhite, and 10% lack access to a vehicle.

SPEED, RELIABILITY, AND FREQUENCY BENEFITS

Based on stakeholder feedback during the pre-environmental phase, Metro is making immediate improvements to existing service on Vermont Avenue. These "near-term" enhancements will include dedicated bus lanes designed to increase service frequency

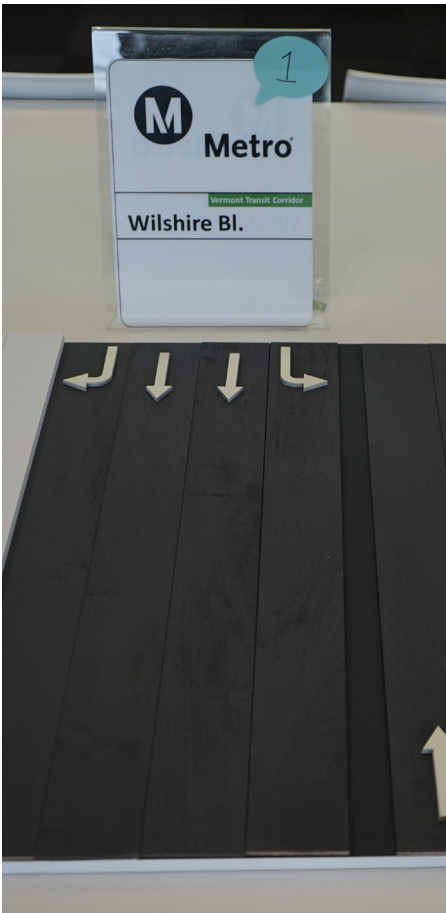
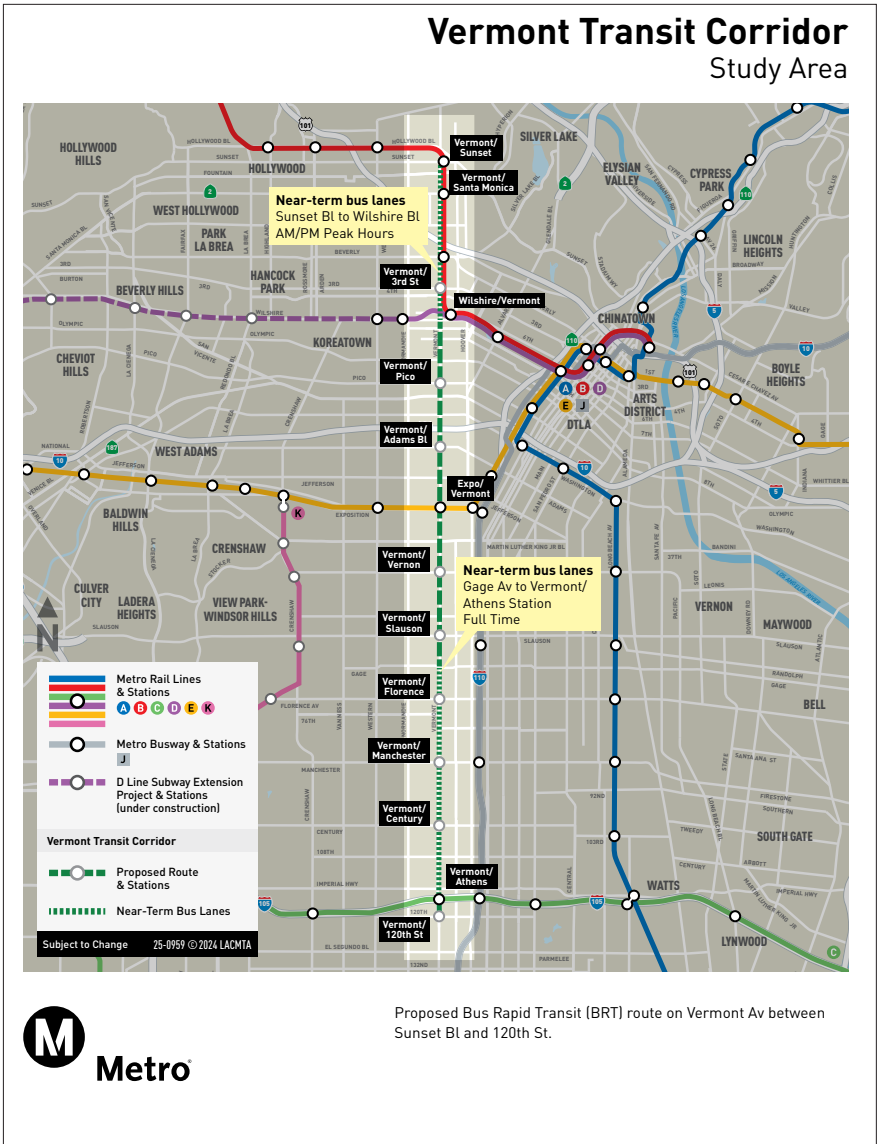
SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC DATA POINTS



by up to 15%, transit signal priority (TSP), and curb-running bus lanes in two segments of the corridor. Specifically, the improvements will operate during AM/PM peak hours from Sunset Boulevard to Wilshire Boulevard and continuously all day from Gage Avenue to the Vermont/Athens C Line Station. Completion of these enhancements is expected in 2025.

PROJECT AREA

The 12.4-mile-long corridor traverses six Los Angeles City Council Districts, two Supervisorial Districts, fourteen neighborhood councils, and many key educational, cultural, medical, social, and faith-based centers. The various communities that make up the VTC include, but are not limited to, East Hollywood, Thai Town, Little Armenia, Little Bangladesh, Wilshire Center, Koreatown, West Adams, USC Village, Expo Park, Vermont Square, Vermont Knolls, Vermont Vista, Broadway-Manchester, and Westmont-Athens.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

Metro has integrated community engagement into the Vermont Transit Corridor project since 2021, treating it as a core principle rather than a formality. From the outset, Metro prioritized understanding the communities it serves, recognizing that public input is essential to ensure the project meets residents' needs and aspirations. By actively listening, Metro gains invaluable insights into transportation challenges, priorities, and preferences for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and rail options.

This feedback directly shapes the project, maximizing benefits for the corridor's diverse communities. Metro's inclusive approach—including multilingual outreach and engagement with diverse cultural groups—ensures that every voice is heard throughout the planning process. Moreover, public engagement fosters community ownership and trust.

When communities play an active role in shaping the project, they are more likely to support it and feel invested in its success. Transparent communication about decision-making, public feedback incorporation, and overall project progress is essential to building that trust. This collaborative approach ultimately improves project outcomes, strengthens community relationships, and promotes a more equitable and inclusive transportation system.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MILESTONES

This commitment to engagement has driven several key milestones.



1. Cultural Needs Assessment and Equity Analysis

These assessments involved understanding each community's unique transportation challenges and priorities along the corridor. This included recognizing how income levels, vehicle access, spoken languages, and cultural preferences influence how people use and interact with public transit. These assessments ensure that the project is designed to be equitable and accessible to all, considering the specific needs of each community it serves. For example, understanding that a significant portion of a community relies on walking to access transit might lead to prioritizing improved pedestrian infrastructure and shaded walkways around stations.

2. Station Design Workshops

These workshops were designed as interactive sessions where community members could actively contribute to planning future BRT stations. Participants provided insight into aspects like station location, accessibility features (e.g., ramps, elevators, tactile paving), amenities (e.g., seating, shade, real-time information displays), and integration with the surrounding neighborhood (e.g., pedestrian walkways, bike paths, public art). This collaborative approach ensures that stations are functional and reflect the character and needs of the communities they serve.

3. Transit Rider Survey

Surveys proved to be helpful feedback tools as they allowed an understanding of transit riders' experiences and preferences along the VTC. Surveys were conducted in multiple languages and on and off-peak times. Metro implemented the following methodology:

- Onboard surveys: Distributing surveys on buses to gather feedback on travel times, service frequency, comfort, and amenities.
- Intercept surveys: Conduct surveys at bus stops and stations to gather information about rider demographics, trip purposes, and satisfaction with existing service.
- Online surveys: Using online platforms to reach a broader audience and gather feedback on proposed improvements and design options.

This data helped identify areas for improvement and ensured that the project meets the needs of current transit users. The survey's key finding was a high demand for the Vermont bus line, highlighting the need for increased frequency and capacity.



4. Public Meetings

The Vermont Public Meetings consisted of three in-person and one virtual meeting in the corridor's North, Central, and South parts in March and April 2024.

Each 1.5-hour meeting engaged community members in interactive conversations, real-time polling, and small breakout discussions focused on gathering feedback on the Vermont Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. Key topics included pedestrian safety, station access, design options for the median parkway, and desired BRT amenities. The meetings included an open house format where participants could learn about the project and engage with staff at information stations. A presentation provided a project status update and outlined BRT design options, followed by facilitated breakout sessions for in-depth discussions and feedback.

5. Senate Bill 922 (SB 922)

In March 2025, Metro will seek statutory exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) through Senate Bill 922 (SB 922) that exempts active transportation projects including bus rapid transit projects from CEQA.

Metro prepared three (3) documents for the project as required under SB 922: 1) Racial Equity Analysis, 2) Residential Displacement, and 3) Business Case that present the findings of the analysis and provide an opportunity for the public to review and comment on them. The reports were open for public comments from November 22 to December 20, 2024. Metro held five (5) public meetings for comment submission, in addition comments were also submitted via the project email.



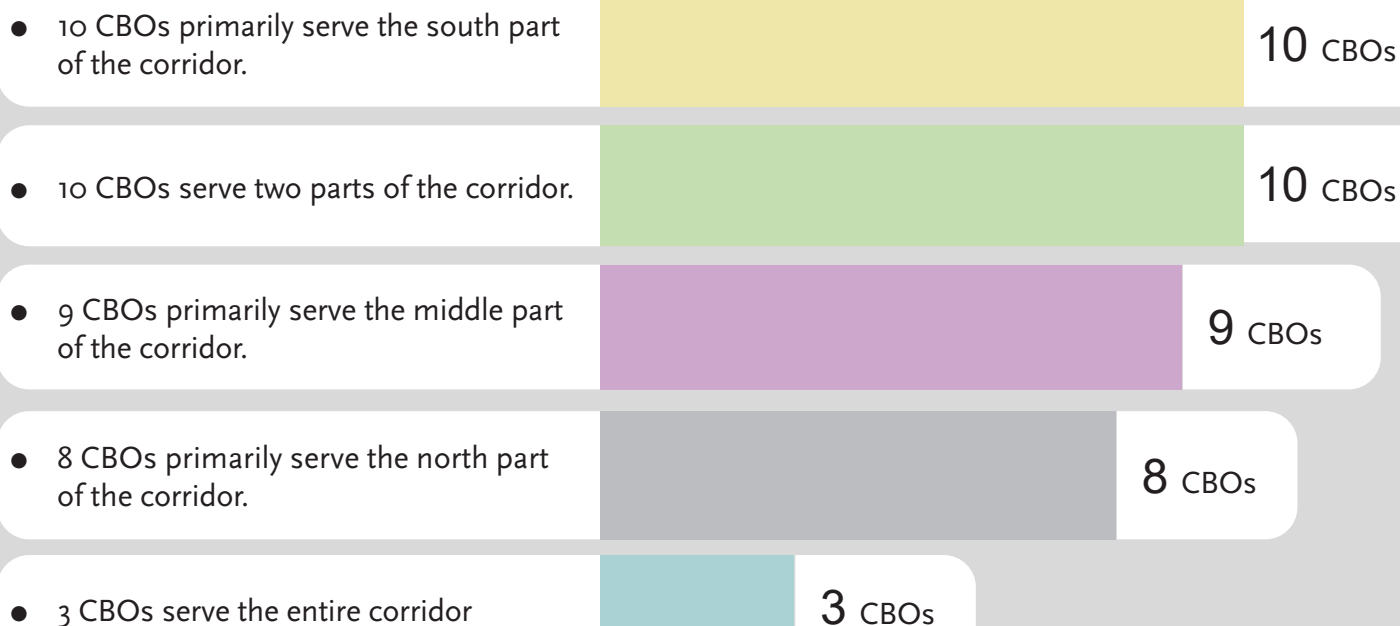
CBO PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The Community-Based Organization (CBO) Partnership Program plays a vital role in ensuring the Vermont Transit Corridor project is responsive to the needs and priorities of the diverse communities it serves. The CBO Partnership Program focuses on establishing meaningful partnerships with Community-Based, Faith-Based and Community Development-Based organizations to facilitate deeper engagement with diverse communities along the corridor. Below are additional details on Metro's partnerships, and for purposes of this report, all partners are referred to as CBOs generally, however, some may be Faith-Based Organizations (FBO) or Community Development-Based Organizations (CDBO):

- 8 CBOs primarily serve the north part of the corridor.
- 9 CBOs primarily serve the middlepart of the corridor.
- 10 CBOs primarily serve the southpart of the corridor.
- 3 CBOs serve the entire corridor – probably more serve the corridor as the whole but are focusing on one part of the corridor for this partnership.
- 10 CBOs serve two parts of the corridor.

Of the 40 CBO partners, 19 are CBOs, 9 are FBOs, and 10 are CDBOs. Seven CDBOs are community-based, and 3 are faith-based.

40 CBO PARTNERS



The CBO partners range from substantial, long-established institutions to grassroots, loosely organized entities and everything in between. Each partner provides value to the project in its unique way.

PARTNERSHIP OVERVIEW

The program collaborates with 40 CBO partners, including faith-based organizations (FBOs) and community development corporations (CDCs). These organizations vary in size and scope, ranging from large, established institutions to grassroots community groups. A complete list of participating organizations is attached as Appendix A.

SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work for each CBO partner was designed to be flexible and focused on facilitating community outreach and engagement. Partners engaged in the following activities:

- Distributing information: Disseminating project materials and updates to their constituents.
- Creating community conversations: Hosting meetings, workshops, and briefings to facilitate dialogue about the project.
- Staffing information booths: Providing project information and answering questions at community events.
- Conducting door-to-door canvassing: Reaching out directly to residents and businesses to gather feedback and raise awareness.



DELIVERABLES

CBO partners delivered a range of valuable outcomes, including:

- Increased awareness of the Vermont Transit Corridor project within diverse communities.
- Facilitated meaningful community conversations and feedback gathering.
- Increased participation in project meetings and workshops.
- Disseminated project information to hard-to-reach populations.

BUDGET

The total budget allocation for the CBO Partnership Program is \$250,000, to date, \$128,100 (49% of the budget) has been invested in partnership activities. The CBO Partnership Program is ongoing.



CBO INFRASTRUCTURE

Per Metro’s “CBO Partnering Strategy—Elements for Successful Partnering in Professional Services,” Metro intentionally created a simple and streamlined approach to establish partnerships that would best foster maximum opportunity for participation. To this end, a simple scope of work was developed. The VTC Team meets with prospective CBO partners to provide a project overview, outline the CBO partnership program and its scope of work. If CBOs choose to partner with Metro, the VTC Team works with the CBO representatives to develop their individualized scope of work and conducts a chartering process that outlines the values and principles upon which the partnership is based. Deliverables, expectations, and the schedule are discussed, including ensuring there are no conflicts of interest, and both parties share a clear understanding of what is expected.

Attachment A provides the list of current CBO partners, and Attachment B includes a broader scope of work, charter, and agreement.

OVERALL APPROACH AND SUCCESSES

The CBO Partnership Program was grounded in meaningful engagement, active facilitation, and genuine partnership principles. By collaborating with a diverse range of CBOs representing different communities along the corridor, the program successfully:

- Broadened community reach: Engaged a wider audience than possible through traditional outreach methods.
- Gathered diverse perspectives: Ensured that the voices of traditionally underrepresented communities were heard.
- Built trust and rapport: Established strong relationships with community partners, fostering a sense of collaboration and ownership in the project.

For example, Saint Mark United Methodist Church is one of the champions of the Metro VTC program. As an FBO partner, the organization has helped Metro reach deep into the community by bringing others to community meetings and station design workshops. This allows people who have never participated in public projects to feel comfortable sharing their feedback.



LESSONS LEARNED

The VTC CBO Partnership program has been highly successful in enhancing Metro's outreach efforts, particularly in reaching historically underrepresented communities and stakeholders.

As stated above, Metro's "CBO Partnering Strategy—Elements for Successful Partnering in Professional Services" served as the guiding framework for designing the Vermont Transit Corridor CBO Partnership Program. The strategy has been a central pillar of Metro's community engagement efforts.

Metro began the CBO partnership for the VTC during the pre-environmental phase and continued to build upon this foundation throughout the project. The information below outlines some of the critical "lessons learned" that Metro can consider as it moves forward with other projects that include a CBO partnership component. The proactive approach has provided valuable insights that can guide future CBO partnerships in other Metro projects. Below are some critical lessons learned:

1. *Start with a values-based approach and build trust early*

Establishing trust with community members was prioritized from the outset, recognizing that transparent communication is crucial. This further proved to be a best practice as we built out the CBO partnership program. Key CBOs and thought leaders were initially distrustful of Metro due to past experiences with Metro and other public agencies.

Active listening and practicing listening to understand rather than listening to respond are highly effective communication practices for building and strengthening these relationships.

Consistent follow-up and straightforward, honest updates are also practiced throughout the process. These efforts lead to enhanced participation and collaboration with our CBO partners. By fostering this early on, CBO leaders are more willing and comfortable sharing ideas, concerns, and feedback.

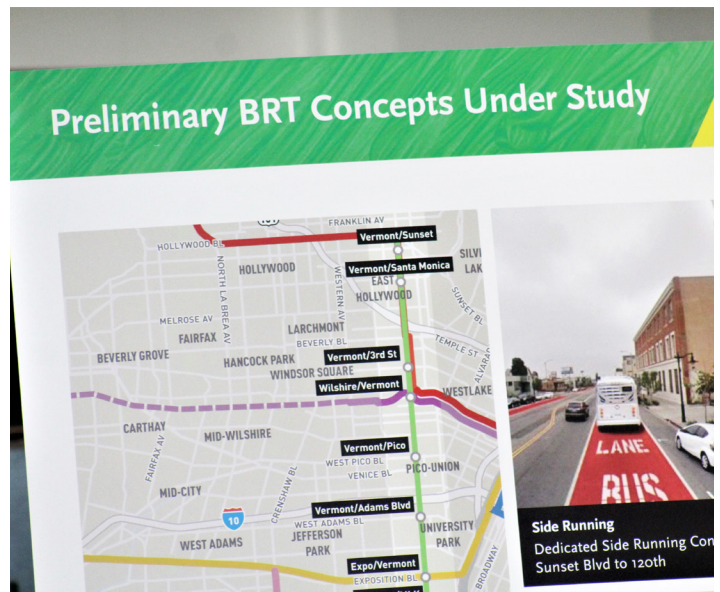


2. *Adapt tactics to meet CBOs and stakeholders where they are*

One component of the program's success is its adaptability, particularly during the pre-environmental phase. Metro went beyond traditional outreach and partnered with CBOs to create "community conversations" a model where Metro went to the CBOs rather than asking them to come to Metro.

During community conversations, CBOs did not feel a power differential between themselves and the Metro team. The community conversations at times would be content-heavy, constructive, and sometimes uncomfortable conversations in an honest, respectful, and open manner that further built respect and trust into the relationship.

Metro intentionally practiced inclusive engagement. Virtual meetings were held in the evenings, during the workday lunch hour, and on Saturday mornings allowing additional options for engagement when in-person meetings during those traditional hours could not be attended. Because Metro practiced inclusive engagement, it is believed that many barriers to participation were minimized, leading to the lifting of more voices that had not been heard by Metro previously and a higher response rate in these communities along the Vermont Corridor.



3. *Empower local voices*

The program emphasized the importance of viewing community members as partners and, in many cases, subject matter experts. Residents were encouraged to attend meetings and actively participate in planning discussions, outreach efforts, and advisory roles.

During the station design workshops, for example, the project team broke the large audience up into small working groups to discuss what urban design elements community members wanted to see incorporated into the station design—this was an example of effective community-based urban planning where community members themselves shared their vision with Metro as the subject matter experts of their communities.

This community-led effort empowered regular people and provided Metro and the VTC Team with deeper insights, ultimately influencing the project's design and outcomes, making them more relevant to meeting the community's needs.

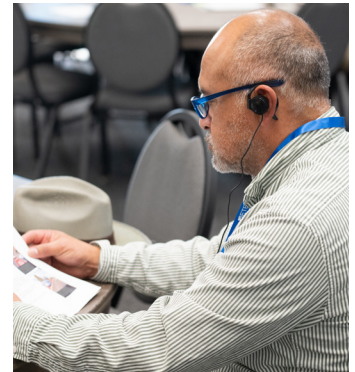
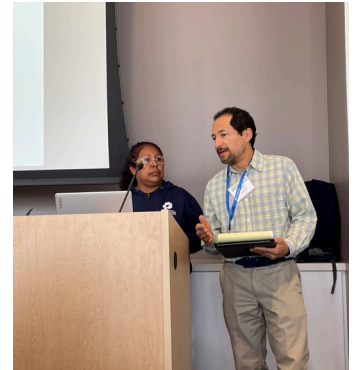
Of course, empowering community voices leads to more robust and sustainable relationships that transcend beyond this project.

4. *Practice cultural competency*

Culturally relevant communication is central to the engagement strategy which is the guiding framework of Metro's equity platform. The VTC Team strives to practice cultural competence in this community engagement program. As we implement this work, we build a rapport with our CBO partners and their constituencies while working hard to gain an understanding of the cultural nuances, whether through their visions of how they see the corridor and how they use transit or through the refreshments for our in-person meetings and workshops.

We also work with our CBO partners for their support and guidance in reaching individuals who are limited in English proficiency, monolingual, or bilingual in languages other than English.

At the minimum, Metro provides translation and interpretation services in Spanish, Armenian, Korean, and Thai in addition to materials translated into Braille, K'iche, and Zapotec.



5. *Leverage networks and resources*

Another critical piece of the CBO Partnership program is strategically partnering with local organizations, leaders, influencers, and coalitions to maximize outreach and engagement. Community Reflections is a small, grassroots organization that has played a powerful and influential role in strengthening community engagement for the Vermont Transit Corridor (VTC) project. Being a trusted and well-established organization within the community, their leadership has been instrumental in shaping effective partnerships helping the VTC team have broader reach and credibility with other CBOs.

6. *Provide clear information*

Practical and simple communication is central to the program's success. While stakeholders are highly sophisticated, not all are highly trained engineers, transportation, or urban planners. They do not always understand the technical processes, terminology, legal protocols, and procedures, nor acronyms used by the project team. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to simplify technical language, including processes and terminology.

This is critically important for several reasons:

- By using overly technical language, we risk disrespecting the community by confusing them and making them feel intimidated from providing important feedback.
- We want to ensure our stakeholders understand the project, its goals, scope, benefits, value, and potential impacts and make this complex information accessible.
- We want to continue to boost community confidence in Metro and the project by encouraging them to ask questions, contribute and collaborate more freely, and “own” the engagement process, which further strengthens our relationships.

- We want to be transparent, set and manage project expectations, empower the community to provide feedback and control any misconceptions or confusion about the project.

7. *Sustain engagement momentum and relationships*

A critical best practice discovered was maintaining ongoing communication outside of scheduled meetings and workshops. By providing this channel of communication it helps to sustain community interest and support, along with strengthening relationships.

Also, keeping our project partners and their constituents informed about progress, even challenges—reinforces trust and ensures continued alignment, and ensures our CBO partners know that our shared experiences on these Metro projects are relational, not transactional. This is another critically important element in this success.

8. *Adjust when needed*

Adjustments in strategy and tactics, whether based on community feedback, issues that arise or for other reasons, are also vital to success.

During the environmental phase, the VTC team conducted community conversations instead of solely having large-scale community meetings. In that phase, the VTC Team conducted surveys and engagement at bus stops and on buses along Vermont Avenue speaking directly to transit users. To extend these engagement efforts the CBO partners also assisted with these activities, in addition to engaging with small business owners, street vendors, and residents who might not have otherwise participated in the project.

ENGAGEMENT IN ACTION

TRANSIT RIDER INTERCEPT SURVEYS

The transit rider intercept surveys were vital to the Vermont Transit Corridor's near-term improvement engagement initiative. These surveys gathered valuable data on rider experiences, satisfaction with the implemented changes, provided critical insights into the effectiveness of the near-term improvements and helped to ensure the project met the community needs.

A total of 371 transit riders along stops and on Bus Lines 204 and 754 were surveyed in Armenian, Braille, English, K'iche', Korean, Spanish, and Zapotec.

Methodology

Intercept surveys were conducted at targeted bus stations during peak and off-peak hours to ensure a representative sample. Digital surveys via QR codes were offered for riders who preferred participating online. The CBO Partnership program was instrumental in ensuring the success of survey administration efforts. CBO, FBO and CDBO partners collected community feedback through well-organized and structured efforts.

Surveyor Training: Surveyors underwent comprehensive training to ensure unbiased interactions, cultural sensitivity, and accurate data collection. Training included scripts and guidelines for approaching riders and answering questions.

Survey Schedule: A detailed schedule was developed to conduct intercept surveys across all targeted stations during peak and off-peak hours.

(see Table 1 on page 18)

Surveyors were assigned to specific stations and shifts to ensure adequate coverage.

Surveyor Supervision: Performance monitoring and ongoing support were provided to surveyors throughout the data collection process.

Survey Sample Size: The target goal was 200 participants, but Metro surveyed 371 bus riders from August 19 to September 6.

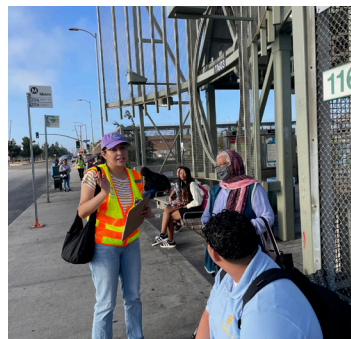


Table 1: Bus Intercept Station Locations

NORTH SEGMENT	SOUTH SEGMENT
Sunset/Vermont Santa Monica/Vermont Beverly/Vermont 3rd/Vermont Wilshire/Vermont	Gage/Vermont Florence/Vermont Manchester/Vermont Century/Vermont Athens/Vermont

Survey Questions:

Please see Attachment C

Respondent Feedback

The surveys highlight that riders seek improvements in reliability, safety, cleanliness, equity, fare enforcement and amenities:

1. Reliability

- Significant delays, particularly during afternoons and nights.
- Buses frequently skip stops or pick up/drop off riders away from designated areas.
- Buses often pass by stops without picking up passengers due to overcrowding.

2. Safety

- Concerns about homeless individuals at bus stops and on buses, particularly at night.
- Reports of harassment of female riders.

3. Cleanliness

- Buses and bus stops are often dirty, with trash, unpleasant smells, and unsanitary conditions.

4. Equity

- Lack of accessibility for seniors and people with disabilities, particularly at the Athens station.
- Disparity in amenities compared to stations in wealthier areas.
- Lack of bus shelters, forcing riders to wait in the sun.

5. Fare Enforcement

- Concerns about fare evasion, particularly among homeless individuals.
- Issues with TAP card readers and back door access.

6. Amenities

- Insufficient seating and lack of bus shelters.
- Requests for improved bus stations and benches.



BRIEFINGS – ELECTED OFFICIALS AND KEY INSTITUTIONS

Regular briefings with elected officials on the city, state, and federal levels have been held to provide them with the overall project plans and updates. These briefings have been essential throughout the project's life cycle to seek guidance and gather input from our elected officials, who represent many communities and business owners along the corridor.

Key institutions and stakeholders along the corridor are also briefed regularly to keep them informed about project schedules, planning updates, and invitations to project meetings.

Below are briefings held from early 2024 to the present:

COUNCIL DISTRICT	MEETING DATES	REPRESENTATIVE PRESENT
1-Hernandez	July 11, 2024 November 8, 2024 March 12, 2025	Councilmember Hernandez Louie Leiva Kyle Hickey Helen Campbell
8-Harris-Dawson	February 14, 2024 May 14, 2024 May 21, 2024 November 13, 2024	James Ingram Lara Garcia Akinyele Turner Roberto Perez
9-Price	February 6, 2024 April 18, 2024 May 16, 2024 October 27, 2024 December 3, 2024	Councilmember Price Mike Garcia Mike Castillo Sherilyn Corea James Westbrooks
10-Hutt	March 12, 2024 October 3, 2024	Andrew Westall Kimani Black Hakeem Parke-Davis
13-Soto-Martinez	February 13, 2024 October 2, 2024	Rogelio Pardo Emma Howard
15- McOsker	February 27, 2024 December 11, 2024	Sergio Carillo Aksel Palacios Pamela Thorton

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Overall, council offices support proposed plans for improved transit along Vermont, recognizing the long-term benefits that enhanced transportation will bring to communities. However, the offices emphasized the importance of continued outreach and engagement to keep their constituents informed throughout the process.

INSTITUTIONS

Below are the organizations that have been briefed since December of 2023:

- Braille Institute of America
- Central City Association
- CHA Hollywood Presbyterian Medical Center
- Children's Hospital Los Angeles
- Church of Scientology
- East Hollywood Business Improvement District
- Expo Park Authority
- LA Coliseum Commission
- Los Angeles City College Foundation
- Masjid Omar ibn Al-Khattab
- Slate-Z Transit Working Group
- University of Southern California (USC)
- West Coast University/American Career College

CBO PARTNERSHIP PROJECT FEEDBACK

CBOs and Neighborhood Councils play a vital role in representing the community's diverse interests and serve as trusted partners in outreach and engagement efforts. They provide valuable insights into community needs and help connect the project team with residents who may not be easily reached through traditional means. The VTC project team has successfully engaged 40 CBOs, 11 Neighborhood Councils along the entire corridor, and 9 advocacy groups.

Through these relationships, 22 community briefings have been held to date to provide project updates in the primary languages of English and Spanish, but also in Armenian, Korean and Thai when requested by the community.



Below are the questions and feedback from organizations:

- **ACT-LA** has been conducting outreach on the project and has concerns about Phase 1 and that there is no dedicated bus lane in the central part of the corridor – from Wilshire Blvd. to Gage Avenue and why this will not be part of Phase 1, given that it is part of the BRT.
 - Through our engagement program, we are learning about parking sensitivity in that segment, particularly from the business community. Metro is listening and learning from our engagement. We will focus on the areas where we can deliver immediately and continue to increase engagement in this corridor segment to ensure all stakeholders are aware.
- **KIWA** (Korean Immigrant Workers Alliance) is doing extensive outreach in this central part of the corridor. They have collected more than 400 signatures in support of a dedicated bus lane in this section. There are concerns about parking, but logistically, is there a physical obstacle to preventing the installation of a dedicated bus lane in this segment now that we understand the concerns about parking raised by others?



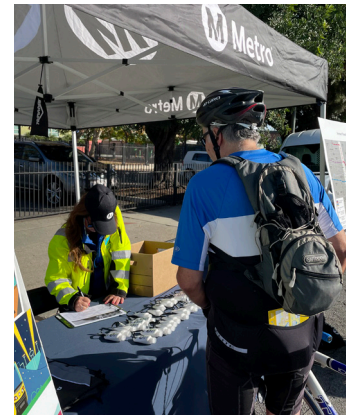
- No physical barrier prevents the implementation of a dedicated bus lane in this area. Still, through our engagement efforts, quite a few concerns have been raised about this segment. Metro wants to ensure we work with stakeholders in this segment. There are sensitivities that Metro is addressing. We understand and appreciate the desire to implement a dedicated bus lane in the central segment as part of Phase 1 of the project and feel the need to continue the engagement and information about the project in this segment

- No physical barriers will be installed as part of the dedicated lane.

- **Vermont Knolls Neighborhood Association,** *Thank you for including us in the partnership. Asked if buses would yield to parking cars.*

- Yes. Only one section of the corridor has a curb-running segment, but buses will yield to other cars/vehicles.

- **TrueLA Church**—*We are happy and pleased to be part of the 44% of faith- based institutions engaged in this project and thankful to be part of the 18,000 stakeholders engaged as well. Thank you to Metro for hearing from those who raised concerns about accessing parking and driveways and addressing them.*



PUBLIC MEETINGS

CULTURAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND EQUITY ANALYSIS

In February 2024, Metro held three (3) workshops to gather crucial input from community members and stakeholders about the cultural and historical assets within the project study area. Interpreters were available in Armenian, Korean and Spanish to ensure everyone felt included and could participate. These workshops aimed at:

- Identify and Prioritize Key Assets: Participants helped refine the project's list of cultural and historical assets, highlighting those most important to the community.
- Improve Transit Service: Discussions focused on current transit service and proposed BRT stations, ensuring they effectively serve residents and commuters.
- Enhance Community Spaces: Breakout sessions allowed for detailed feedback on study area maps, identifying key community places, landmarks, and pedestrian areas that need improvement.



To ensure the project was equitable and accessible to all, Metro conducted thorough assessments that considered factors such as:

- Income levels
- Vehicle access
- Languages spoken
- Cultural preferences

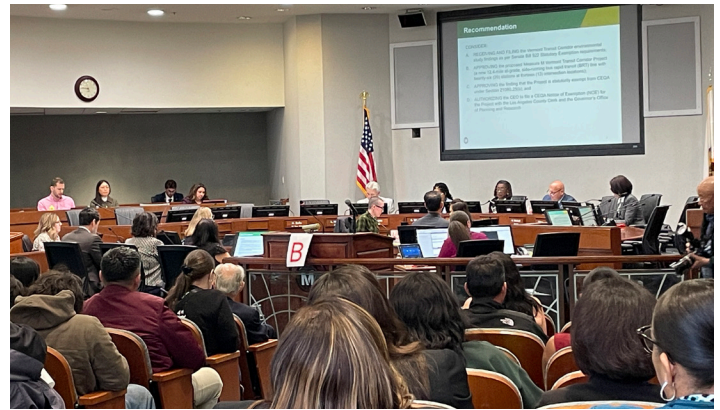
The following is an at-a-glance participation summary of each meeting

Table 1: Cultural and Historical Assets Workshops Summary

DATE	TIME	SUB AREA	LOCATION	PARTICIPANTS
February 12 2024	9:30 am	South	Weingart YMCA Wellness & Aquatic Center 9900 South Vermont Ave, Los Angeles, CA	12
February 12 2024	2:00 pm	Central	Ward AME Church 1177 West 25th St, Los Angeles, CA	16
February 12 2024	9:30 am	North	Los Angeles County Department of Children & Family Services Building Terrace Conference Room 8300 South Vermont Ave, Los Angeles, CA	22

The workshop focused on several key areas, including cultural needs and racial equity analysis, and each workshop was divided into two modules.





1. Shared the initial list of the three Study Areas' community assets and key findings:

- South Sub Area: 120th and Gage Avenue. This segment is approximately 4.1 miles long and historically contains African American and Latinx communities.
- Central Sub Area: Gage Avenue and Venice Boulevard; this segment is approximately 4.4 miles long and has many public, institutional, and regional attractions such as Exposition Park, the University of Southern California, and an array of commercial uses north of the I-10.
- North Sub Area: Venice Boulevard to Sunset Boulevard; this segment is approximately 3.9 miles long with a high density of commercial land uses such as shopping centers and medical facilities, making it a higher density for pedestrian activity along this corridor segment.

2. The key findings identified in the study area were:

- 82 City of Los Angeles designated historic resources.
- 438 community assets that included 119 faith-based institutions, 99 educational institutions, 57 medical facilities, 37 community/government services, 9 cultural destinations, 35 open spaces, and 82 historical and cultural monuments, two historic neighborhoods designated at Historic Preservation Overlay Zone HPOZ's and eight neighborhoods designated by the City of Los Angeles as ethnic.

Metro requested feedback from community members and stakeholders on the initial asset list, including identifying missing assets and which assets were most important to the community. In this exercise, participants identified missing community assets, such as places used by Korean, Oaxacan, Salvadoran, and other Central Americans.

Additional asset information was gathered regarding activity centers like grocery stores and employment places.

The workshop then transitioned to a fun and interactive session that aimed at uncovering hidden cultural and historical assets with activities such as:

- Introducing the proposed BRT, station plans, and station area access and urban design plans.
- Presentation of the study area assets and key findings from the asset identification efforts were shared and documented.
- Workshop participants shared their study area community stories and memories, their favorite places and landmarks, and their thoughts on the existing transit service and the proposed BRT.
- Small breakout sessions where participants discussed, reviewed, and marked up large study area maps with identified community assets where they provided input and ideas on key community places, landmarks, destinations, pedestrian areas, people, organizations, churches, and local stories which had to strengthen the study areas' neighborhoods and institutions.
- Group leaders reported back on key points, ideas, and concerns identified by each group.
- A station featuring virtual reality tools that brought the corridor and BRT vehicle to life.



Workshop participants identified missing community assets, such as those places used by Korean, Oaxacan, El Salvadoran, and other Central American cultures. Additional asset information and data were gathered from workshop participants, specifically regarding activity centers such as grocery stores and employment places. Workshop participants provided the following feedback and comments about the Study Areas and Project design:

- Community assets are essential in maintaining character and a sense of community.
- The project design should celebrate the study area's unique communities, cultures, people, food, and hidden gems, as well as its history, both good and bad.
- Recognize the importance of "daily community assets" such as shopping, schools, and churches.
- Vermont Avenue was once a corridor of beautiful buildings. Encourage the reuse of the remaining historic buildings.
- Add way-finding signage to express pride in the study area's neighborhoods and encourage people to visit key neighborhood assets.



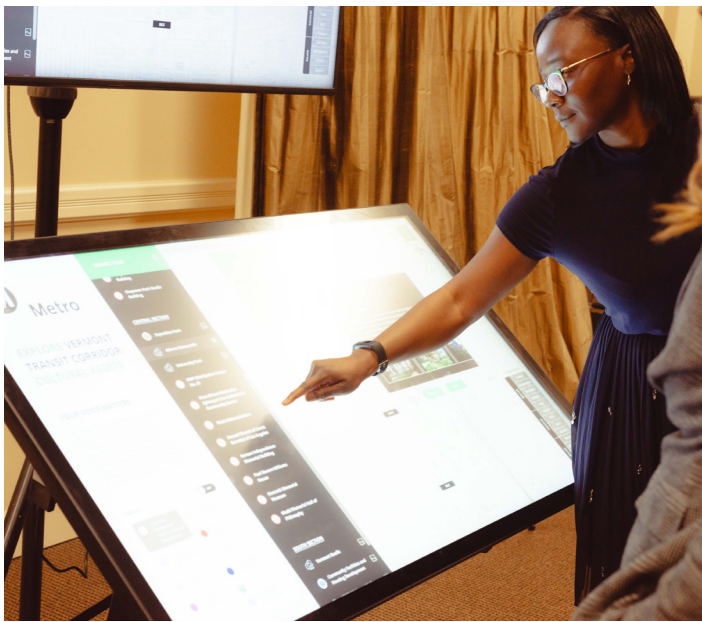
- Encourage art in the project design by engaging with local communities and informing local artists of Project-related art opportunities.
- Keep the parkway trees on Vermont Avenue south of Gage Avenue, as the trees contribute to the unique character of the community.

This information helps tailor the project to each community's specific needs. For example, if a community relies heavily on walking to access transit, the project might prioritize improved pedestrian infrastructure and shaded walkways around stations.

By utilizing the above strategies, over 700 stakeholders were able to voice their opinions on shaping the future of Vermont Avenue. The workshops featured an interactive open house with five (5) activity areas, a presentation, and a bus station workshop to learn and share feedback collaboratively.

Interpreters and materials were available in Armenian, Braille, K'iche', Korean, Spanish, and Zapotec to ensure everyone felt included and could participate fully.





STATION DESIGN WORKSHOPS

By prioritizing participation and community feedback, Metro held seven (7) Urban Design Station Workshops in May and June 2024, spread across the Vermont Transit Corridor (North, Central, and South areas), to ensure that the community provided meaningful feedback to inform the urban design of the VTC.

To gather and recruit participation, the outreach team promoted the workshops at eighteen (18) community events and meetings along the corridor from mid-April to the end of May. In addition, Metro collaborated with 28 CBOs and FBOs from North to South, who also participated in the workshops and provided invaluable feedback on their community needs. This effort was intended to secure the participation of transit-dependent people and those who have not historically participated in the decision-making process for public transit projects.

Metro also utilized a comprehensive notice approach to ensure all communities along the 12.4 miles were aware of the upcoming workshops. In addition to sending email notices to the 12,000 contacts in the project database, Metro sent postcards to every household and business along the corridor twice and collaborated with local organizations to spread the word via email, social media and newsletters, door-to-door distribution, business engagement, and transit intercept outreach.



Station design workshop scheduled meetings and participation:

SUB AREA	DATE	TIME	LOCATION	ATTENDEES
Central	May 21 2024	6:00 pm	First AME Church Renaissance Center 1968 W. Adams Blvd Los Angeles, CA	156
South	May 23 2024	6:00 pm	Weingart YMCA Wellness & Aquatic Center 9900 S. Vermont Ave Los Angeles, CA	108
South	May 28 2024	10:00 pm	Irmas Youth Center 11911 Vermont Ave Los Angeles, CA	113
North	May 31 2024	10:00 pm	Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Administration Building 523 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, CA	69
Central	June 1	10:00 am	Masjid Omar ibn Al-Khattab 1025 W. Exposition Blvd Los Angeles, CA	62
North	June 6	6 PM	Los Angeles City College Student Union, Room A 798 N. Heliotrope Dr. Los Angeles, CA	109

The information from the workshop served as a valuable guidepost in shaping the design of the enhanced bus stations for the BRT system, ensuring that stations integrate seamlessly with the unique character of the communities they serve. Below are the key themes and opportunities for improvement identified during the Station Design Workshops:



Safety & Security: This was the overwhelming concern at all meetings. Riders strongly desired well-lit stations, a visible security presence—comments for both unarmed and armed, uniformed, and plain-clothed officers—and all officers trained for de-escalation tactics, emergency call buttons, and security cameras. Concerns included aggressive behavior on buses and stations, particularly towards women and children.

Accessibility: People with disabilities and seniors emphasized the need for accessible features such as ramps, designated seating with clear signage, and potential assistance boarding buses. Concerns included current issues with drivers not parking correctly and failing to assist disabled individuals.

Information & Technology: Riders requested real-time bus arrival information displays, charging stations for phones and potentially electric wheelchairs, and Wi-Fi availability at stations and on buses.

Cleanliness: Maintaining a clean and sanitary environment was a significant concern. Participants mentioned litter and the presence of unhoused individuals impacting cleanliness.

Bike Amenities: Cyclists who use the BRT system for commuting highlighted the importance of dedicated and safe bike lanes throughout the corridor.

Seating: There was a call for sufficient seating with shelters from the elements (sun and rain). Some riders requested designated seating areas for disabled individuals and seniors

Community Integration: Participants desired stations to reflect the community's character and be welcoming. Ideas included incorporating artwork created by local artists and multilingual signage for clear communication.

Sustainability: Solar panels on stations and the use of sustainable strategies were viewed favorably by participants.

Unhoused Population: The feedback highlights a conflict between safety concerns and the needs of the unhoused population. Concerns addressed physical spaces for riders on vehicles and at stations when unhoused individuals use seating and are unavailable for riders. Solutions were explored that address both, such as increased sanitation efforts, social service referrals, and potential partnerships with homeless shelters or service providers.

Balancing Needs: While ensuring safety is paramount, creating a welcoming environment for all riders is crucial. Consider exploring community policing models or expanding ambassador programs with apparent de-escalation and social services training.

Light Rail Integration: While not a significant focus in the meetings, explore the possibility of integrating future light rail stops into the current BRT station design to prepare for potential future expansion.



PROJECT UPDATE MEETINGS

Metro hosted a series of meetings in March 2024 and October 2024 to update community members and stakeholders on the project’s status, next steps, and anticipated timeline. Each 1.5-hour meeting engaged in interactive conversations, real- time polling, and small breakout discussions focused on gathering feedback on the Vermont Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. Key topics included pedestrian safety, station access, design options for the median parkway, and desired BRT amenities.

The meetings included an open house format where participants could learn about the project and engage with staff at information stations. A presentation provided a project status update and outlined BRT design options, followed by facilitated breakout sessions for in-depth discussions and feedback.



Table 3: March 2024 Project Update Meetings Summary

SUB AREA	DATE	TIME	LOCATION	PARTICIPANTS
Central	March 21 2024	6:00 pm	First African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church Renaissance Center 1968 W. Adams Blvd, Los Angeles, CA	45
Virtual	March 23 2024	9:00 am	Via Zoom	57
North	March 26 2024	6:00 pm	Los Angeles City College Student Union Room A 798 N. Heliotrope Drive, Los Angeles, CA	52
South	March 28 2024	10:00 pm	Crenshaw Christian Center 7901 S. Vermont Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90047	81

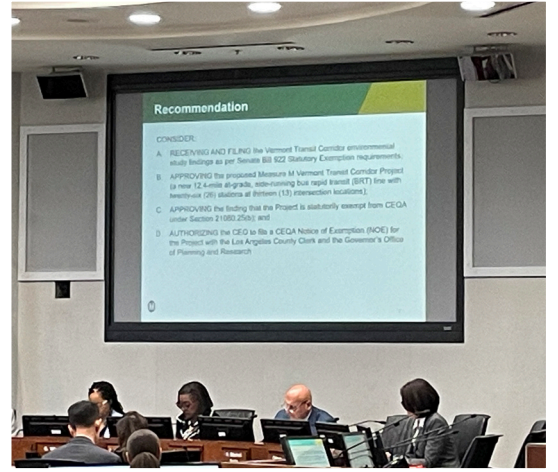
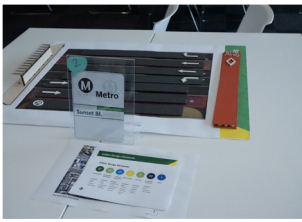


Table 4: October 2024 Project Update Meetings Summary

SUB AREA	DATE	TIME	LOCATION	PARTICIPANTS
South	October 8 2024	10:00 am	Irmas Youth Center 11911 S. Vermont Ave Los Angeles, CA 90044	67
North	October 8 2024	6:00 pm	Los Angeles City College 798 N. Heliotrope Drive Los Angeles, CA 90026	182
Virtual	October 9 2024	12:00 pm	Via Zoom	76

FEEDBACK

With each community meeting, the team received and gathered crucial feedback from the community, highlighting their needs, desires, and safety concerns from Phase 1 through the completion of the project. Key themes were:

- **Parking:** Residents are concerned about losing parking spaces due to bus lanes and beautification efforts.
- **Business Impact:** Business owners worried about reduced access due to lane reduction/ parking loss.
- **Community Impact:** Like the Crenshaw project, there is a concern that the project will negatively impact the community’s character.
- **Safety:** Residents are concerned about the safety of cyclists and potential bus accidents due to lane reduction.
- **Traffic Flow:** There is a worry that lane reduction will worsen traffic congestion.
- **Bus Lane Enforcement:** People expressed doubt that drivers will respect bus lanes.
- **Alternative Design:** information is needed as to the reasoning for why Metro is going with side-running BRT in the southern segment.

Some collective sentiments were:

- Support for electric buses and reducing carbon pollution.
- Interest in improved public transit and reducing car dependency.
- A desire for bike lanes and improved pedestrian infrastructure.



SENATE BILL 922 PUBLIC MEETINGS

Metro is seeking a statutory exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) through Senate Bill 922 (SB 922) which is a streamlined process that exempts sustainable transportation projects, including bus rapid transit projects, from an in-depth CEQA review process.

To support the case for the applicability of statutory exemption under SB 922 Metro prepared three required analyses/reports: 1) Racial Equity Analysis; 2) Residential Displacement Analysis; and 3) Business Case Analysis. The SB 922 analyses are presented in the Vermont Transit Corridor Project Senate Bill 922 Reports: Racial Equity Analysis, Residential Displacement Analysis, and Business Case available on the Metro website at <https://www.metro.net/projects/vermont>.

SB 922 requires that at least one (1) public meeting be held to discuss each of the reports, offering the public a chance to review and comment on them. The SB 922 documents were also made available at public libraries located on or near the corridor. In early December, Metro held five (5) public meetings throughout the corridor to not only present the report's findings but to also provide:

- The details of the statutory exemption process so stakeholders are aware of the legal and environmental framework governing the Project.
- A comprehensive description of the Project's benefits and impact.
- Allow the public, community members, and stakeholders to review the SB 922 documents and provide comments.

Of those meetings two (2) were virtual that featured an open house www.metrovr.org where attendees could learn more about the project background and its benefits, view BRT corridor simulations, as well as the SB 922 report findings as noted below:

Racial Equity Analysis

The purpose of the analysis was to identify racial equity impacts and communities that will benefit from or be burdened by the Project in addition to developing strategies that address the existing racial inequities. The findings were positive and would provide improvements and opportunities throughout the corridor to help alleviate the existing inequities by:

- Improving transit performance (reduction in headways and travel times).
- Enhancing customer experience (new enhanced BRT stations, safety amenities, passenger amenities, and clear signage).
- Investing in the community (engaging CBOs, stakeholders, improving mobility, access and connectivity).



Residential Displacement Analysis

The purpose of the Residential Displacement Analysis was to identify areas at risk and the potential for residential displacement and develop strategies to mitigate the potential risks. The findings were positive as the BRT project is located entirely within the Vermont public right-of-way and would not directly contribute to residential displacement during either the construction or operation phases.

Business Case Analysis

The purpose of the Business Case Analysis was to assess the Project's benefits, feasibility, costs, and overall impact of the investment. This analysis answers several key questions, including how the Project aligns with Metro's long-term goals, what the associated costs and benefits are, what the societal impacts might be, what the long-term financial implications are, and how the Project would be developed and implemented. The Vermont Transit Corridor is currently the busiest bus corridor in the Metro system, with about 38,000 daily boardings. The selected Project would improve efficiency along the congested corridor and facilitate safe and accessible transport to major employment, social services, educational facilities, and regional activity centers.

The findings were positive including the creation of an estimated 1,000 construction and 260 operations and maintenance jobs per year; increased road safety; cleaner air, and \$5.40 in community benefits for every dollar spent.

FEEDBACK

Public feedback during the SB 922 meetings revealed strong community support for the VTC project. Stakeholders provided valuable input on various topics, including station design and amenities, emphasizing incorporating green space, Wi-Fi, and street furniture. Security was also a significant concern, with numerous comments highlighting the need for increased security measures at stations, on buses, and for operators.

Additional feedback focused on economic development opportunities, potential traffic impacts, and specific station location requests. This input will be carefully considered as the project moves forward.



Table 5: SB 922 Meetings Summary

SUB AREA	DATE	TIME	LOCATION	PARTICIPANTS
Central	Dec 7 2024	6:00 pm	Masjid Omar ibn Al-Khattab 1025 W. Exposition Blvd, Los Angeles, CA	48
South	Dec 9 2024	9:00 am	Crenshaw Christian Center 7901 S. Vermont Ave, Los Angeles, CA	82
Virtual	Dec 11 2024	12:00 pm	Via Zoom	53
North	Dec 11 2024	6:00 pm	Los Angeles City College Student Union Room A 798 N. Heliotrope Drive, Los Angeles, CA	67
Virtual	Dec 14 2024	6:00 pm	Via Zoom	61



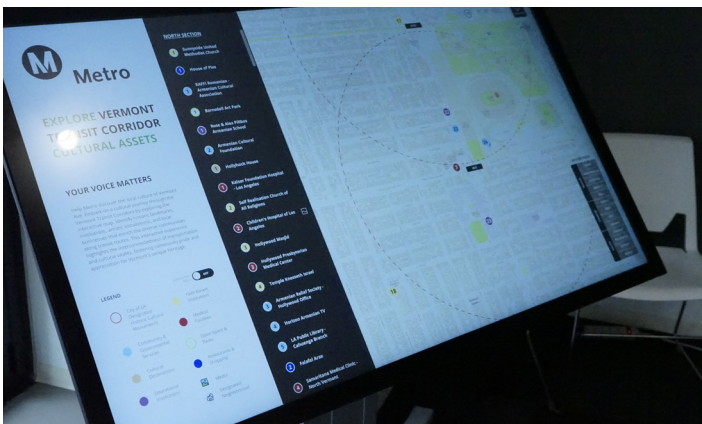
ATTACHMENT A

ATTACHMENT A

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE METRO VERMONT CORRIDOR PROJECT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

There are a total of 40 community-based organizations participating in the Vermont Transit Corridor (VTC) Community Engagement Program. This CBO partnership program is based on Metro's CBO Partnering Strategy that was adopted by the Metro Board of Directors in 2021. The CBO partnership program is intended to reach deeper into the community and engage stakeholders who traditionally have not participated with Metro before so Metro can hear from all voices.



VTC CBO Partners

The following is a list of the CBO partners to date:

Northern Segment of the VTC

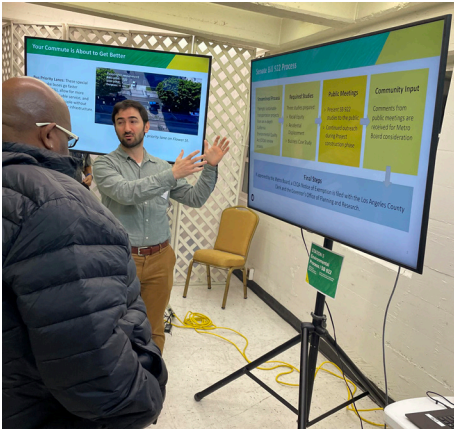
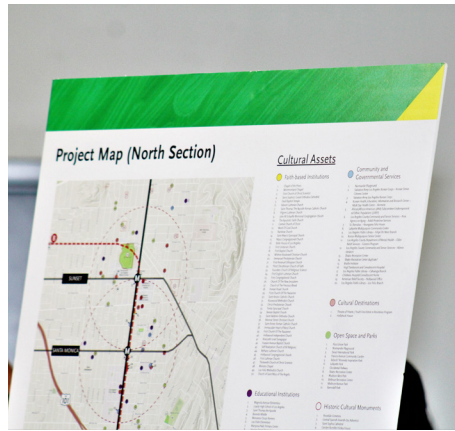
- **Anderson Munger YMCA**

The Anderson Munger YMCA is a larger community organization providing health services, food distribution, and other social programs to people of all ages. They helped raise awareness about Metro's community meetings and design workshops, particularly to a Spanish- and Korean-speaking audience. However, they also helped reach the Bangladesh community. They also participated as key opinion/thought leaders representing their constituents in the equity and cultural needs workshops and participated in the community meetings and station design workshops.

- **Bangladesh Unity Federation of Los Angeles (BUFLA)** is a coalition of the Bangladeshi diaspora in Los Angeles County. They have a building on Vermont Avenue in the northern part of the corridor and helped Metro raise awareness of the community meetings and the station design workshops. They also participated in our CBO roundtable sessions and the station design workshops representing the voice of the Bangladesh community.

- **CIELO – Comunidades Indigenas en Liderazgo**
CIELO is a grassroots organization based in the northern part of the corridor and provides social services to a multitude of Indigenous monolingual communities, many Indigenous to Latin America. CIELO participated in community conversations, the CBO roundtable sessions and translated VTC materials.





● **Climate Resolve**

Climate Resolve is a grassroots advocacy organization working to close equity gaps throughout LA County and helping engage its constituents in the northern part of the VTC. They are a new CBO partner and helped raise awareness about our community meetings.

● **Haven Neighborhood Services**

Haven Neighborhood Services is a social service agency. They partnered with Metro in the early phase of this project by participating in the CBO roundtable sessions and helped distribute information for the community meetings in March.

● **Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA)**

HOLA is a social service agency based in Koreatown and Wilshire Center. HOLA helped raise awareness of our community meetings, represented the voice of their clients at the equity and cultural needs workshops, and brought monolingual-speaking Spanish parents to the station design workshops. HOLA will continue its partnership with us for the December community meetings.

● **Honduran Chamber of Commerce**

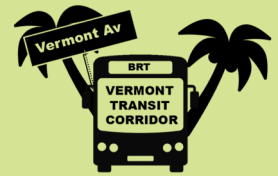
The Chamber is a business organization that reaches deep into the bilingual and monolingual immigrant community in the northern part of the corridor. The Chamber has helped us through information distribution, canvassing the north part of the corridor, including reaching street vendors; they participated in our community meetings, equity and cultural needs workshops representing the immigrant voices of their members, participated in our station design workshops and identified large-scale community events for the VTC project team to engage further with stakeholders.



- **Koreatown Youth and Community Center**
KYCC is a social services agency and a community development corporation providing direct services to its clients in Korean, Spanish, and English. KYCC has participated in the CBO roundtable sessions, represented the voices of their clients in the equity and cultural needs assessment workshops, helped with information distribution for all our community meetings, brought their clients to our community meetings, and helped conduct canvasses to the Spanish-speaking and Korean-speaking business owners along the northern and central segments of the corridor.

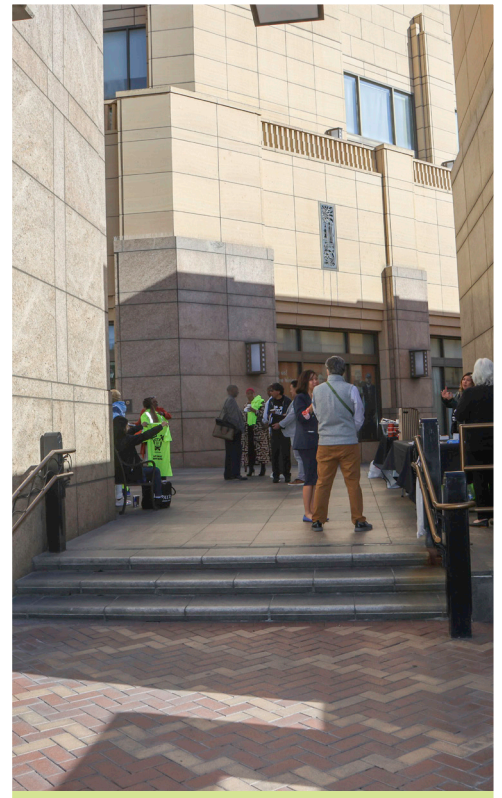
- **Thai Community Development Corporation**
The Thai CDC is a grassroots direct social service and community development corporation based in the northern part of the VTC. They represented the voices of their Thai Town and East Hollywood constituents at the equity and cultural needs assessment workshops, helped us raise awareness through community resource events targeting Spanish, Armenian, and Thai monolingual and bilingual constituents, and helped raise awareness and bring people to the October community meetings. They are one of our newer CBO partners helping us to reach the Thai community.





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Central Segment of the VTC

- **AADAP Employment Access**

AADAP Employment Access is a workforce development agency as part of the largest substance use/prevention/economic development corporations in South- and South-Central Los Angeles. AADAP EA participated in the CBO roundtables, raised awareness about all our community meetings, represented their constituents in the equity and cultural needs workshops, and brought clients to the community meetings and station design workshops.

- **AADAP Therapeutic Community (TC)**

AADAP TC is a residential substance use treatment facility providing direct services to formerly incarcerated, formerly unhoused, and others undergoing current substance use treatment. The majority of their clients are born and raised in the VTC. AADAP TC participated in the CBO roundtables, raised awareness of all our community meetings, represented their constituents in the equity and cultural needs assessment workshops, brought clients and constituents to all our community meetings and the station design workshops and conducted a canvas for every phase of our engagement program.

- **AADAP Youth and Family Programs (YFP)**

AADAP YFP is a social service program providing social services to at-risk youth and their families in South Central and South Los Angeles. They provide culturally competent services to their clients in English and Spanish and other languages as needed. AADAP YFP participated in the CBO roundtable sessions, raised awareness of all our community meetings, represented their clients in the equity and cultural needs assessment workshops and brought their constituents to our station design workshops and all our community meetings and did canvasses for the workshops and community meetings.

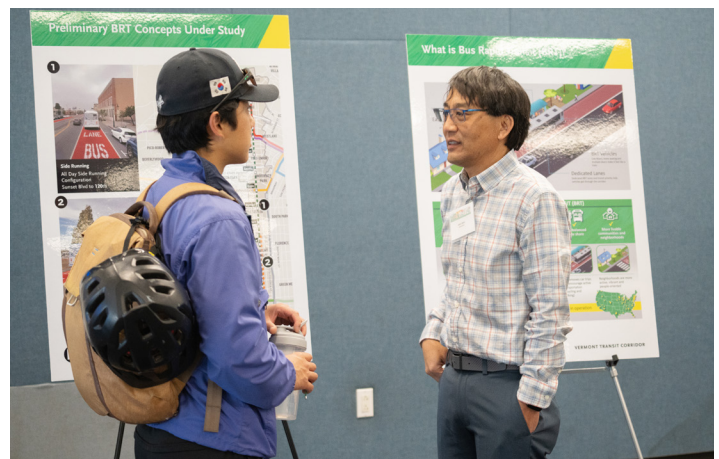
- **ACT-LA**

ACT-LA is a transit advocacy organization serving LA County but housed in KIWA, Korean Immigrant Workers Alliance. They advocate for immigrant Korean and Latino workers and others. ACT-LA participated in the CBO roundtable sessions and helped raise awareness about the community meetings.

- **Bryant Temple AME Church and Bryant Temple AME Community Development Corporation**

Bryant Temple is a faith-based organization, and their CDC provides direct social services and two residential facilities for unhoused men and women, respectively. Bryant Temple has participated in our CBO roundtable sessions, helped distribute information about all our community meetings, represented their constituencies in the equity and cultural needs assessment workshops, and brought people to all our community meetings and station design workshops.

They have been one of our most influential partners.



- **Ceasefire**

Ceasefire is a coalition of social service agencies working throughout South- and South-Central Los Angeles with at-risk youth, formerly incarcerated and justice system impacted individuals and families. Ceasefire has helped raise awareness about the community meetings and station design workshops and brought many people and youth to engage in our community meetings. They have been one of our most effective partners to reach the voices that have not been heard by Metro before.

- **Community Coalition**

Community Coalition is a grassroots social justice and advocacy organization working with families and individuals in South- and South-Central Los Angeles. Community Coalition helped raise awareness about the October community meetings.

- **Omar Ibn Al Khattab Foundation**

The Omar Ibn Al Khattab Foundation is housed in the mosque of the same name in the central part of the corridor. They are a faith-based organization that also provides social services in the central part of the VTC. They helped raise awareness of, hosted us and brought their constituents to the station design workshops and community meetings.

- **Second AME Church**

Second AME Church is a faith-based organization serving the central part of the VTC. They are a newer partner and helped raise awareness of the October community meetings.

- **SLATE-Z**

SLATE-Z is a transit advocacy coalition based in the South- and South-Central parts of the VTC. They helped raise awareness of the October community meetings.





- **Community Reflections**

Community Reflections is a very grassroots social service agency that provides direct social service to individuals and families in South- and South-Central Los Angeles. Community Reflections has participated in our CBO roundtable sessions, has been instrumental in distributing information about our community meetings, and have made key introductions to other highly engaged CBOs.

- **First AME Church Renaissance Center**

The Renaissance Center has been instrumental in hosting community meetings in March and June and helped raise awareness of the project to its constituency.

- **Islah LA**

Islah LA is a faith-based organization and school in the central part of the VTC. They helped raise awareness of the community meetings and station design workshops and helped distribute information about the project through their food distribution program.

- **Vermont Slauson Economic Development Corporation**

The Vermont Slauson EDC is a community development corporation based in the central part of the VTC. They represented their constituents in the equity and cultural needs assessment workshops and helped raise awareness of our community meetings.

- **Ward AME Church**

Ward is a faith-based organization based in the central part of the VTC. They participated in the CBO roundtable sessions, helped raise awareness of our community meetings, and hosted our equity and cultural needs assessment workshops.

Southern Segment of the VTC

- **Bethel AME Church**

Bethel AME Church is a faith-based organization in the southern part of the VTC. They participated in the CBO roundtable sessions and helped raise awareness of our community meetings and station design workshops.

- **Community Services Unlimited**

CSU is a social service agency that uses food to reach people and advocates for equity-based programs in the south part of the VTC. CSU helped raise awareness about the project, identified and hosted community events to reach a broader audience, distributed project information through its food distribution program and cooking and gardening classes, and catered three of our community meetings.

- **Crenshaw Christian Center/Vermont Village Community Development Corporation**

CCC/VV CDC is a faith-based organization, community development corporation, and school located in the southern part of the VTC. They participated in our CBO roundtable sessions, helped raise awareness, and hosted community meetings and station design workshops.

- **St. Mark AME Church**

St. Mark AME is a faith-based organization in the south part of the VTC. They participated in our CBO roundtables, helped us raise awareness about the community meetings and station design workshops, and represented their constituencies at the equity and cultural needs assessment workshops.

- **St. Mark United Methodist Church**

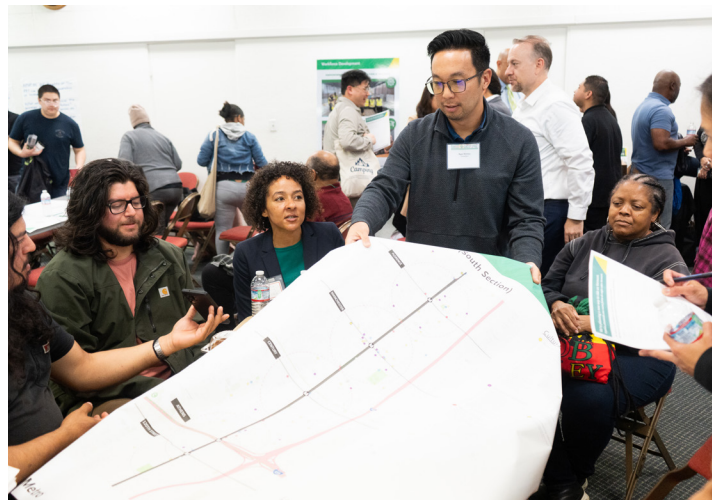
St. Mark UMC is a faith-based organization based in the southern part of the VTC. They raised awareness and brought many people who never participated in a project like this to our community meetings and station design workshops. St. Mark UMC has been one of our most, if not the most, effective CBO partners in this project thus far.

- **Southern California Empowerment Corporation**

The Southern California Empowerment Corporation is a grassroots organization working with at-risk youth in the South- and South-Central parts of the corridor. They also have roots in the north part of the VTC. They participated in the CBO roundtable sessions, represented their constituents in the equity and cultural needs assessment workshops, raised awareness and brought people to the station design workshops and community meetings as well as conducted canvasses to help us reach deeper into the community.

- **TrueLA Church**

TrueLA Church is a faith-based organization in the southern part of the VTC. They participated in our CBO roundtable sessions, raised awareness about, and brought people to our station design workshops and community meetings. They also represented their constituents in the equity and cultural needs assessment workshops.



- **Vamos Vermont**

Vamos Vermont is a very grassroots transit advocacy organization in LA County. They participated in our CBO roundtable sessions and raised awareness about our station design workshops and community meetings.

- **Vermont Knolls Neighborhood Association**

Vermont Knolls is a neighborhood association based in the south part of the VTC. They helped raise awareness about the community meetings and conducted a canvas for the station design workshops and the community meetings.

- **Weingart YMCA**

The Weingart YMCA is a larger social service agency providing health and other services to people of all ages in the south part of the VTC. They participated in our CBO roundtable sessions, raised awareness about our community meetings and station design workshops and hosted one of our workshops.

- **West Athens Westmont Task Force**

The Task Force is a coalition of other CBOs, FBOs, block clubs, neighborhood associations, schools, and individuals in the southern part of the VTC. The Task Force helped raise awareness about and hosted our community meetings and station design workshops, identified several large-scale community events and neighborhood/community clean-up events to raise awareness and reach a broader audience for the project, and conducted a canvas for the station design workshops and community meetings.

- **Southeast Community Development Corporation**

The Southeast Community Development Corporation is our technology CBO partner, helping us bring VR and AR tools when needed. They participated in our CBO roundtable sessions and helped us with the community meetings and station design workshops.



ATTACHMENT B



Metro Vermont Transit Corridor Community Partnership Program Scope of Work

BACKGROUND

The Vermont Transit Corridor Project is a Measure M-funded project with a projected opening between 2028 and 2030.

The busiest north-south bus corridor in Los Angeles County, the Vermont Transit Corridor extends approximately 12.4 miles along Vermont Avenue from Hollywood Boulevard south to 120th Street. Pre-Covid, the Vermont Corridor had approximately 45,000 daily boardings on the Metro Rapid Line 754 and Metro Local Line 204 with important connections to numerous other transit services including:

- Metro B Line (Red)
- Metro D Line (Purple)
- Metro E Line (Expo)
- Metro C Line (Green)

The corridor also serves numerous important key activity centers including:

- Koreatown
- Medical Facilities (Kaiser Permanente, Children's Hospital, and Hollywood Presbyterian)
- Educational Institutions (University of Southern California, Robert F. Kennedy Community Schools, Los Angeles City College, and American Career College, SEED Transportation School, etc.)
- Consulate of El Salvador
- Exposition Park
- Braille Institute

Throughout the corridor, the project benefits communities with very diverse socioeconomic and demographic backgrounds including a large percentage of low-income communities that heavily rely on public transportation to access jobs, schools, medical centers, and recreational facilities.

In February 2019, Metro completed the Vermont Transit Corridor - Rail Conversion/Feasibility Study (https://media.metro.net/projects_studies/brt/Vermont_BRT_Report_2019-03-18.pdf), which was presented to the Planning and Programming Committee in April 2019.

The purpose of the study was to re-evaluate two initial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) concepts identified in the 2017 Vermont BRT Technical Study (<https://www.metro.net/projects/bus-rapid-transit-studies/brt-technical-study/>) to evaluate the feasibility of BRT alternatives along the Vermont corridor.

In March 2019, Metro completed the Rail Conversion/Feasibility Study which evaluated and compared multiple rail modes and/or alternatives and ensured that a BRT project would not preclude a future conversion to rail.

In April 2019, the Metro Board of Directors approved a motion directing staff to not only move forward with the BRT alternatives but to also advance rail concepts into environmental review to preserve the ability to deliver a rail project should additional funding materialize.

Prior to the Vermont Transit Corridor Project moving into the environmental review process, Metro is conducting a pre-environmental public outreach and community engagement program that is in alignment with the Metro Equity Platform Framework that seeks to increase equity in the region. This effort will help determine how best to move forward with the project through a community partnership program to collaborate on establishing a vision for the corridor and re-evaluating the project goals and objectives as well as identifying near, mid, and long-term improvements for the corridor.

COMMUNITY-BASED PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Metro has developed a community based-partnering program (CBO) to establish a consistent and equitable approach to partnering with community, faith and other organizations that provide services along the Vermont Transit Corridor.

Per Metro's plan, "Community-Based Organization Partnering Strategy, Elements for Successful Partnering in Professional Services," produced in Spring 2021, that establishes consistent and clear parameters for this type of partnering, organizations with whom Metro may partner as part of this CBO are broadly interpreted and defined and can encompass groups with formal legal status and unregistered groups such as block clubs or other groups that may not have a legal designation yet or are organized to work on collective efforts to benefit the community.

The intent behind this CBO seeks to increase equity and reach deeper into the community to solicit input and feedback from stakeholders who traditionally do not necessarily engage with Metro on transportation planning projects.

Community Based Partnership Goal

The goal of the CBO is to successfully partner with organizations working along the Vermont Transit Corridor to effectively provide information and solicit input about the Vermont Transit Corridor Project to their members/constituents/stakeholders who traditionally do not engage with Metro on transportation planning projects.

Cognizant that equity takes collaboration, it cannot be achieved in a silo by one organization or one public agency. Therefore, Metro seeks the assistance of various organizations in the community for this effort.

Organizations may opt to partner with Metro in various ways, including:

- *Roundtable collaboration*
Organizations will continue to meet with Metro to provide guidance on how best to engage with corridor-wide stakeholders. Organizations will recommend activities, events, noticing strategies to ensure a broad participation of stakeholders in the project's planning process.
- *Information distribution/dissemination*
Organizations will disseminate information to their members and/or constituencies to drive their participation and engagement in VTC activities – in-person, virtual and/or online. Examples include sharing announcements in organization newsletters, websites, email campaigns, flyer distribution and/or booths or tables at organization-hosted events.
- *Integrating project information in CBO programs to seek input*
Meaningful integration of information about the Vermont Transit Corridor Project to potentially affected stakeholders through an event/activity to reach 100 or more members/constituents.
- *Facilitating and gathering community-led conversation(s)*
Coordinate a minimum of 15 to 20 (preferably more) members/constituents to gather meaningful input in-person or virtually.
- *Conducting community engagement and outreach programs*
Coordinate a tailored engagement program inclusive of outreach activities to reach 100 or more members/constituents to garner meaningful input.

Some organizations may choose to propose one specialized task in support of the public outreach and community engagement goals while others may perform multiple tasks in the course of their partnership with Metro.

COMPENSATION

There are a variety of ways to create an effective partnership between Metro and community organizations to meet the public outreach and community engagement goal for the Vermont Transit Corridor Project. For this partnership program, community organizations will be compensated for their contributions in an amount commensurate with the level of effort and engagement.

EXPECTATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The CBO Program expectations are that the engagement programs implemented in this phase of the Vermont Transit Corridor Project will effectively reach stakeholders who traditionally do not participate in Metro's transportation planning projects regularly.

Success measures for organizations will be based on the effectiveness, strategy and tactics implemented and results – numbers of people reached and level of depth of information and engagement.

Metro will streamline and simplify the administrative process to decrease the complexity of doing business with Metro for this project. This includes administrative templates organizations can use to:

- Propose partnership options.
- Submit invoices and reimbursement for any costs incurred.
- Document meetings, events, and activities to report all engagement activities.

Metro will be accountable for providing support to organizations to simplify the partnership process and the organizations will be accountable for delivering and capturing meaningful stakeholder input and providing such input to Metro.

Interested organizations shall complete the following application to be considered for the CBO partnership program for the Vermont Transit Corridor Project and once accepted, may submit a comprehensive scope of work or scopes of work on a project-by-project basis.

This CBO partnership program events will occur throughout 2024.

#

**Metro Vermont Transit Corridor
Community-Based Organizations (CBO) Partnership Program Application**

Date	
Organization Name	
Organization Description/Constituency served Programs and Services	
Organization Type	<input type="checkbox"/> faith-based organization <input type="checkbox"/> school <input type="checkbox"/> block club <input type="checkbox"/> professional association <input type="checkbox"/> social/human service agency <input type="checkbox"/> public health agency <input type="checkbox"/> economic/community development agency <input type="checkbox"/> other _____
Contact Person	Name
	Title
	Email
	Phone
Mailing Address	

Partnership Activity/Type	Brief description/ Expected Reach/Expected Deliverables or Results	Cost Request
<i>Information distribution/dissemination</i>		
<i>Meaningful integration</i>		
<i>Community-led conversation/focus group</i>		
<i>Large engagement events</i>		
<i>CBO support for Metro-led large engagement events</i>		

Other Direct Costs	Brief description/ Expected Reach/Expected Deliverables	Stipend Request
Mileage/Parking		
Refreshments/Materials		
Miscellaneous		

Please return VTC Community Partnership Program Application via email to:

Rev. Everett Bell via email: everettbelljr@murakawacommunications.com

Kathia Velasco via email: kathia@veladaconsulting.com Attachments:

- **Study Area Map**
- **Sample template invoice**
- **Meeting/Event summary form**
- **CBO Partnership Program checklist**



Vermont Transit Corridor Community-based Partnership Program Charter

BACKGROUND

Metro has developed a community-based-organization (CBO) partnership program to establish a consistent and equitable approach to partnering with community, faith, and other organizations that provide services along the Vermont Transit Corridor for the Vermont Transit Corridor Project, a Measure M-funded project planned for the 12.4-mile-long busiest north-south street in the agency.

The CBO Partnership Program is part of the community engagement process that aligns with the Metro Equity Platform Framework that seeks to increase regional equity and reach stakeholders who have been underrepresented in Metro's transportation planning process.

COMMUNITY-BASED PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

On _____, representatives of

and Metro and/or Metro's representative, Murakawa Communications, met to kick off the contractual relationship, review the agreement, scope of work, schedule and expectations for the working relationship and communication.

PARTIES TO THIS CHARTER

Organization
Name

Description &
Mission

Metro

The transportation agency overseeing the Vermont Transit Corridor Community Engagement Program. Metro staff are committed to Metro’s Equity Platform and to honestly engage equity through four pillars: 1) define and measure; 2) listen and learn; 3) focus and deliver; 4) train and grow.

CBO Partnership Goal

The goal of the CBO Partnership Program is to successfully partner with organizations working along the Vermont Transit Corridor to effectively provide information and solicit input about the Vermont Transit Corridor Project to their members/constituents/stakeholders who are underrepresented in Metro’s transportation planning process.

EXPECTATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The CBO Partnership Program expectations are that the engagement programs implemented in this phase of the Vermont Transit Corridor Project will effectively reach stakeholders who have been underrepresented in Metro’s transportation planning projects.

- Metro and Metro Representative’s Responsibilities
- Schedule and facilitate meetings and communication when needed
 - Promptly respond to questions and concerns
 - Pay on time
 - Keep communication lines open at all times
- Organization’s Responsibilities
- Provide detailed scope of work that includes the outreach strategy
 - Commit to reaching hard-to-reach stakeholders
 - Provide summary of activities with clear quantifiable metrics with invoices
 - Promptly respond to questions and concerns
 - Keep communication lines open at all times

Vermont Transit Corridor

METRO, METRO’S REPRESENTATIVE AND ORGANIZATION AGREEMENTS

Confidentiality

We agree that some information is confidential to the public until internal reviews have been completed or the Metro Board and officers take action. Metro, Metro’s Representative, and Organization may not share confidential project information with the general public or other CBO partners without permission.

Transparency, Trust, Commitment and Project Neutrality

Metro, Metro’s Representative, and Organization commit to collaborative solutions, prioritizing clear, open, transparent, and inclusive dialogue even “if the going gets tough.” Metro, Metro’s Representative, and Organization recognize that each individual and organization have different perspectives and backgrounds and may not always agree.

All parties will respect differences of opinion and not seek to undermine each other as they pursue their organizational missions.

Commitment to Listening

Metro, Metro’s Representative, and Organization commit to listening to each other and to the stakeholders involved in this effort. All parties agree to return this partnership effort's input, comments, and information.



Vermont Transit Corridor

Term

The term of this Agreement is from _____ through _____ . All work will be conducted in 2024 and concluded by December 2024, leading up to the Metro Board decision in the first quarter of 2025. Invoices shall be submitted upon completion of partnerships but no later than December 31, 2024.

Compensation

Organization shall submit invoices for services and reimbursable costs with documentation reflecting expenses. Organization shall be paid within ten (10) days of Murakawa Communications receiving payment from Metro or sooner.

Organization will be compensated for up to the total referenced in the Organization's Scope of Work – Exhibit A in the Appendix.

Invoicing

Organization shall address invoices:

Metro
VTC CBO Partnership Program
c/o Murakawa Communications
2110 Artesia Blvd #354
Redondo Beach, CA 90278

Invoices shall be signed by Organization contact and sent via email to:

Rev. Everett Bell, VTC Deputy Project Manager
everettbelljr@murakawacommunications.com

General Conditions

1) Independent Contractor

Organization is an independent contractor responsible for all methods and means used in performing the scope of services under this agreement and is not an employee of Metro or Murakawa Communications.

2) Taxes, Assessments and Premiums

Organization will be responsible for any taxes, assessments and premiums, any applicable unemployment insurance contributions, Workers Compensation insurance premiums and any and all taxes in connection with the services for this partnership.

3) Confidentiality

This partnership may require Organization to review and/or receive information that is confidential to the public until internal reviews have been completed or the Metro Board

and officers take action. Organization may not share any confidential project details shown as draft or other documents and/or materials and information to the general public or other CBO partners without permission.

4) Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest are evaluated by Metro on a case-by-case basis. **Metro's Ethics Declaration** includes a series of 10 questions:

- a) In the past 12 months, has any employee been a Metro Board member or Metro employee?
- b) Is any employee related to a Metro Board member or Metro employee?
- c) Any employee presently a Metro Board member or Metro employee?
- d) Do any Metro Board members or Metro employees own any stock in Declarant company?
- e) In the past 12 months, has any employee given any gifts to a Metro Board member or Metro employee?
- f) In the past four (4) years, has any employee or family member of any employee made any campaign contributions to any present Metro Board member or Metro employee?
- g) Does respondent now employ as a lobbyist, or intend to employ as a lobbyist, any former Metro Board member or any person employed by Metro in the past 12 months?
- h) Did any employee receive or have access to any confidential information concerning this contract?
- i) Did any employee perform work within the last three (3) years relating to the project or the services contemplated to be performed under this contract, including the development of the Statement of Work/Statement of Services or any specifications or any involvement with earlier phases of the project or services to be provided under this contract?
- j) If you answered "yes" to any of the above a-i, provide on a separate sheet, a detailed explanation of the facts and circumstances that shall give rise to the "yes" answer. This explanation shall, include names, dates, facts, amounts and other and anything else necessary for a thorough response. Each explanation shall identify which of the nine (9) questions it is responding to and a separate explanation for each "yes" response is required.

5) Indemnification by Organization

As respects the conduct of Organization under this Agreement other than the performance of services, Organization shall indemnify, hold harmless and defend Metro and Murakawa Communications, their officers, directors, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, liabilities, damages, losses and costs.

As respects the performance of services under this Agreement, Organization shall indemnify and hold harmless Metro and Murakawa Communications, their officers, directors, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, liabilities, damages, losses

and costs to the extent caused by the negligence or willful misconduct of Organization or its representatives.

6) Termination of Agreement

If this Agreement is terminated, Organization will submit final invoices for any costs incurred at time of termination and will be paid within ten (10) days of Metro's payment to Murakawa Communications, or sooner. Neither party may assign its interest in this Agreement to any other person or party without express written consent of the other party. This Agreement constitutes the complete and sole agreement between both parties.

Agreed:

signed

signed

Organization Representative Name - printed

Metro Representative - printed

Date

Date

Attachments:

Exhibit A – Organization's Scope of Work proposal

ATTACHMENT C

ATTACHMENT C – TRANSIT RIDER SURVEY

- Language:
 - English
 - Español (Spanish)
 - Armenian
 - Braille (Please notify the surveyor if you need assistance.)
 - K'iche' (Please notify the surveyor if you need assistance.)
 - Korean
 - Zapotec (Please notify the surveyor if you need assistance.)

2. What is your race or ethnic identification? (Select all that apply):

- Latino/Hispanic
- Black/African American
- White/Caucasian
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Native American
- Other (Please specify): .
- Prefer not to answer

3. How often do you ride a bus along the Vermont Corridor?

- Every day (Monday-Friday)
- 1-3 times per week
- A few times per month
- Less than once a month

4. How often do you experience delays due to traffic congestion on Vermont Avenue?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

5. Please rank the following potential benefits of a bus priority lane from most to least important (1 being most important):

- The bus showing up on time more often
- More reliable trip times
- Safety by reducing opportunities for speeding and unsafe lane changes

6. Would having a more reliable trip time on this line encourage you to use the bus more?

- Very Likely
- Likely
- Not Likely

7. What would encourage you to take the bus more?

8. Which elements are most critical to you as a transit rider?

Please rank the following from 1 to 4, with 1 being the MOST important:

- Improve bus speed and reliability
- Minimize traffic congestion
- Keep existing street parking
- Improve bus stops (i.e., benches, shelters, lighting, etc.)

9. Which improvements would benefit you the most on lines 204 and 754? (Select all that apply):

- Bus-only lanes during rush hour to make buses faster
- Enhanced security
- Bus shelters
- More frequent buses
- Other (Please specify):

10. How would you describe your overall experience on the existing bus lines 204 and 754?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

11. What specifically makes you satisfied or dissatisfied with your experience riding bus lines 204 and 754?

12. Before today, had you heard or read about transportation improvement plans for the Vermont Corridor?

- Yes
- No

(The following questions are optional and will be used for demographic purposes only)

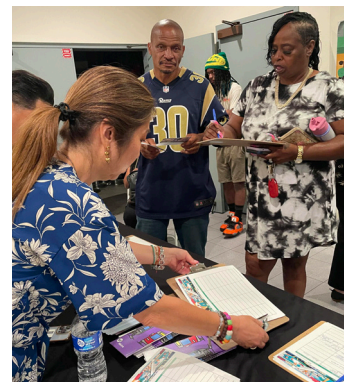
Finally, we have a few questions about you to help us better understand our riders. These questions are optional. (Ask demographic questions if the rider consents.)

13. How many days a week do you usually ride Metro?

- 5 or more days a week
- 3-4 days a week
- 1-2 days a week
- Less than 1 day a week

14. What is your age?

- Less than 18 years old
- 18-24 years old
- 25-34 years old
- 35-49 years old
- 50-64 years old
- 65 or older
- Prefer not to answer



15. What is your gender identity?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to answer

16. What is your household's total annual earnings?

- Under \$5,000
- \$5,000-\$9,999
- \$10,000-\$14,999
- \$15,000-\$19,999
- \$20,000-\$24,999
- \$25,000-\$34,999
- \$35,000-\$49,999
- \$50,000-\$99,999
- \$100,000 or more
- Prefer not to answer



