

Freight Working Group Meeting #1

LA County Goods Movement Plan

INTRODUCTION

LA Metro in partnership with the Cambridge Systematics consulting team held the first meeting of the Freight Working Group on April 23rd. The session included a conversation with Metro CEO, Phil Washington, who emphasized the importance of goods movement throughout the agency. The purpose of the meeting was to solicit feedback on the following questions:

1. Does the draft LRTP objective capture how goods movement should be reflected within Metro's long range transportation plan (LRTP)?
2. Does the draft Goods Movement Strategic Plan vision statement reflect the most important LA County goods movement priorities for the next 5 – 10 years?
3. What are the most critical goods movement related challenges in LA County, potential barriers to implementation, and where can Metro add value?

The key themes that emerged throughout the day include:

- LA Metro should fill the role of leader and regional convener in goods movement issues.
- LA Metro's leadership should include close collaboration with regional partners.
- Competitiveness, technology, safety, equity, and sustainability (financial and environmental) should be top priorities for Metro in goods movement related issues.
- The LRTP objective can be improved, most importantly by defining and strengthening the word 'enhance'.
- The vision statement reflects LA Metro priorities. It can be improved with further emphasizing Metro's leadership with regional partners, the need to balance diverse goods movement user needs, and highlighting competitiveness, safety and equity.

Building upon these key themes, a high level summary of the feedback from the Freight Working Group on the three key questions is below. Next steps include:

- Feedback on the LRTP objective will be shared with the internal Metro LRTP team in the immediate weeks following the meeting.
- The vision statement will be revised and shared with the working group at the second Freight Working Group meeting on July 16th.
- Key findings related to question three above will be synthesized further and integrated throughout the goods movement strategic plan in a variety of ways.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM FREIGHT WORKING GROUP MEETING #1

1. LRTP Objective

Proposed LRTP Objective

Enhance the multi-modal regional goods movement transportation system

LRTP Objective Feedback from FWG

The LRTP objective accurately reflects how freight should be included in the LRTP. The objective could be improved by strengthening the word 'enhance' and potentially adding detail about how to enhance the system such as for efficiency and resiliency. A summary of feedback received is below.

- **Enhance** is not a strong enough verb. This was emphasized multiple times in the group and roundtable discussions. Add ***how* we're proposing to enhance the system** - "for speed, reliability, and efficiency" at the tail end
- Consider use of the term **"agile"**. Need to work towards the transportation system of the future.
- The efficiency of the LA freight system has **national and international implications**. LA County is the **regional** hub for goods movement.
- Consider words such as **"innovation, flexibility, resiliency, green and clean"**

The LRTP objective will be tailored to reflect these changes and shared with the LRTP Metro team for recommended addition in the LRTP performance framework.

2. Vision Statement

Proposed Vision Statement

A national leader in implementing innovative, efficient, and effective policies, programs, and projects that support the safe movement of people and goods in a competitive global economy; a steward of equitable and sustainable investments; and LA County's champion for a cohesive and coordinated freight transportation system.

Vision Statement Feedback from FWG

The length of the vision statement and many of the existing word choices are on track. LA Metro can be a leader in goods movement while working with regional partners and balancing all users of the transportation system such as business and local communities. Equity, safety, sustainability could be highlighted more in the vision but these priorities should be balanced with the need to be competitive, respond to rapid changes, and capitalize on new technology. Below is a high level summary of recommended changes:

- **Revise Metro’s Role** – Metro should take a leadership role by being a “**Convener**”, “**Regional partner**” and “**guide**”. Two groups wanted Metro’s work with regional **partners** emphasized.
- **Emphasize the Impacts of Goods Movement**– The vision should communicate the importance of goods movement to the Board. Two groups thought this could be communicated through the national implications.
- **Balance** – Three groups mentioned the need to include balancing all users of the transportation system.
- **Consider Equity** - Two groups said **Equity** and **community impacts** should be included while one table received the feedback that the goal should not be equity driven. Equity can be defined in many ways and that this plan should be clear about how it is measured. **Access to opportunity** was seen as one important way to define equity.
- **Emphasize Safety** – Two groups commented that safety should play a larger role in the vision.
- **Metro should be Dynamic** - The word ‘**agile**’ was suggested for the vision once and once in reference to the LRTP objective. Metro needs to respond to rapid changing and dynamic environment and **encourage technological innovation**.
- **Sustainability** - Define “**sustainable**” to be environmental and fiscally/economically focused.
- **Suggested Language** –

Participants offered several specific line item suggestions to strengthen the vision statement, including:

- **First line (“... policies, programs, and projects”)** – include “reliability” (x2), “responsive,” or “collaborative” rather than “coordinated”
- **Second line (...movement of goods)–** include “efficient” (x5), “innovative”, “effective”
- **Fourth line (...freight transportation system) –** include “modernized”, “mutually beneficial”, “integrated”, “complementary”
- **Other –** include “state of good repair”, “competitiveness” (x3) , “balance”
- Goals should include **sustain jobs**, focus on **economic development**, increase **mobility**, have more efficient movement, and ensure **safety**

The above feedback will be used to draft a revised vision that accurately captures Metro’s role in the goods movement arena. The new vision will be shared at the second Freight Working Group meeting.

3. Critical Goods Movement Challenges as Described by FWG

A handful of key themes emerged from roundtable discussions. These include the importance of a shared use system that is resilient and includes multimodal connectivity. Workforce and equity, particularly in terms of access to opportunity, are opportunities for Metro and its partners. Partnering is also critical in the technology arena to allow for innovation and competitiveness and navigate regulation for a dynamic

freight future. Finally, partnerships with the public and private sector, starting with this plan, can bring people out of their silos and improve regional collaboration. Together with a broad range of stakeholders, this plan can be accountable to the public by working towards shared outcomes through sustainable methods incorporating best practices and fiscal responsibility. Specific responses in key areas are below.

Infrastructure, Multimodal Connectivity, Shared Use Transportation System, Supply Chain Resiliency

- **System resiliency** includes both major (e.g., earthquakes) and minor (e.g., signal issues, power/gas outages) issues. Metro should Consider two elements: (1) How redundant is our infrastructure (2) How resilient/strong are our institutional relationships?
- **Multimodal connectivity** as a metric is important to prioritize investments
- It might be time to bring back the concept of **inland ports**
- **Curbside management** is a key issue

Equity, Workforce

- **Workforce is also a ‘sticky wicket’**. Need to define acceptable risk and balance technology with workforce. Training for critical skills and the ability to change jobs should be emphasized.
- Goods movement is still an opportunity for jobs, but it needs to **be flexible and focus on partnerships**.
- **Equity can be defined in many ways**. There needs to be a definition of how it is measured. Access to opportunity, improving economic and transportation mobility, and other workforce related lenses of equity are important.
- There should be **equitable solutions for air quality issues**.

Technology, Pilots

- Government (including Metro) should set standards and then **allow the private sector to make investments, operate, and do pilot projects** (Mentioned by two groups). Three groups mentioned the public sector limits private partners in the region with **regulations and restrictions**.
- Government should work with private companies to **transition from diesel to zero emissions vehicles**;
- **More investment** is needed on digital/tech infrastructure (i.e. data management platforms; technology that results in more efficient movement of freight; electrical infrastructure when redoing roads.) Government is better situated as the **source of data collection** rather than creating the data collection technology;
- Metro should be a **leader in future technologies and delivery systems**.

Regional Collaboration; National Leadership/ Advocacy for Investments in Freight Network; Multi-Modal Connectivity across Freight Network

- There are **varying views on Metro’s role in the region** but a shared sense that further defining Metro’s role is important. Two groups believe Metro should be an umbrella for **collaboration/partnership**. Having Metro staff **engaged with goods movement stakeholders** is beneficial to all involved.
- At least three groups emphasized that Metro **should understand the range of interests and needs among the public and private sector stakeholders**. One group suggested that the private industry should receive incentives to be part of regional solutions. Multiple tables discussed there being **too many voices and too much noise** which makes it hard to focus on priorities.
- Freight does not recognize jurisdictional boundaries in the same way as agencies – we need to **understand and respect the corridor/region/market level viewpoint of businesses**.
- Metro should take a **lead role in developing performance measures for goods movement** projects and investments. Metro has the opportunity to be a “neutral arbiter” for evaluating publicly funded programs

Local Partnership; Project Delivery Methods

- The strategic plan can help **get stakeholders out of their “silos”** and speak with one voice.
- Projects are seen as “people projects” and sometimes **the impacts to freight are lost**. The benefits of investment in freight need to be articulated through effective **messaging**.
- **Build internal Metro capacity** of Metro staff to deal with data, freight, technology, etc. Metro needs to be more hands in terms of understanding of the **data for decision making** purposes
- **Educate the public** as much as possible to create enforcement.

Fiscal Responsibility; Cost-Sharing; Leveraging Funds; Best Practice; Legislative Policy

- **The plan should increase accountability** and viability and build in project performance outcomes/validation. Participants questioned how the plan will prioritize investments.
- **Competitiveness**
 - Projects on the list for funding need to fit within the goods movement objective.
 - **Convene supply chain optimization/resiliency group** – to gain a better understanding of more tangible competitive issues from the supply chain user perspective.
 - **Talk with a broad range of industry stakeholders** to address issues – BCOs, Transportation service providers, utilities, data collectors/analysts

The above feedback will be considered throughout the rest of the strategic plan process and revisited as the draft and final plans are developed.