

# Agenda Report

January 10, 2022

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**THROUGH:** Municipal Services Committee (12/14/2021)

**FROM:** Department of Transportation

**SUBJECT: PASADENA TRANSIT PARTICIPATION IN METRO GOPASS  
(FARELESS SYSTEM INITIATIVE) PILOT PROGRAM**

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the following proposed actions are exempt from review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 (b) (3); and
2. Authorize Pasadena Transit to accept Metro's K-14 GoPass during Metro's pilot project timeline which is effective no later than February 1, 2022 through June 30, 2022.

## **TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

After reviewing and discussing Pasadena Transit's proposed participation in Metro's GoPass pilot project on December 9, 2021, the Transportation Advisory Committee passed the following motion:

- Support staff's recommendation for Pasadena Transit to participate and accept the Metro K-14 GoPass effective no later than February 1, 2022 through June 30, 2022.

## **BACKGROUND:**

On May 27, 2021, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) Board voted to implement the regional GoPass program, formerly known as the Fareless System Initiative subject to a final financial plan and assurance that the pilot program would not impact Metro's service or ability to maintain its transit system. It is a two school year pilot to identify the true cost of implementing a permanent GoPass

program in LA County. At the September 23, 2021 Metro Board meeting, the Metro Board approved the financial plan for the K-14 program. Metro's financial plan identifies using American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funds to address the funding gap resulting from lost fare related to the GoPass program. Metro has encouraged participating transit agencies also use their ARPA allocation to close their funding gap related to lost fare revenue from the GoPass program. As a Tier 2, Local Operator, Pasadena Transit is not eligible to receive ARPA funds; however, Metro has committed to providing supplemental local funding to help offset lost fare revenue.

GoPass focuses on providing fareless boardings for K-12 students and community college students attending participating school districts and private schools for two school years. In order for students to board fareless, the school district or college they are attending must also participate in the program. A cost sharing agreement has been developed for participating K-12 districts that includes a \$3.00 cost-sharing rate per student per year for all students in the participating school district. Participating community colleges must commit to a \$7.00 cost-sharing rate per student per year for all students enrolled at the participating community college. To date, there are 33 school districts and six community colleges interested in joining the GoPass program.

The total loss of fare related to the GoPass program Countywide, to participating transit agencies including Metro, is estimated to be \$49.9 million for FY22 and FY23. Funds collected through the cost-sharing agreement will be distributed to each participating transit agency based on usage by each participating school district and community college. The funds collected through the cost-sharing agreement will help offset some of the loss of fare for participating transit agencies; however, the majority of the funding gap from the loss of collecting K-14 student fare will be addressed with ARPA funds.

### **GoPass and Fareless for K-12 and Community Colleges:**

Both public schools and private schools may participate in Metro's program. The decision for a school district or college to participate in the pilot program is separate from the City of Pasadena's decision to participate. This is a regional program that requires districts and schools to opt in directly with Metro, as Metro is the program administrator. Metro staff has initiated conversations with Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD) to solicit participation in the program. The City of Pasadena has also reached out to PUSD to encourage their participation. To aid Metro in reaching out to private schools in Pasadena, City staff provided Metro with a list of private high schools within .25 mile of Pasadena Transit and Metro and their respective contacts.

Participation in the GoPass pilot would help identify the true cost of implementing a regional youth transit pass that would provide seamless travel throughout LA County with GoPass participating transit agencies such as Metro. The recommended term of the pilot program for Pasadena Transit is to join the GoPass pilot no later than February 1, 2022 and to continue through June 30, 2023.

Similar to the K-12 component of GoPass, community colleges may participate by contributing to the cost-sharing plan described above. Community colleges that participate will make eligible their students to travel fareless throughout LA County with GoPass participating transit agencies. Pasadena City College (PCC) is participating in this program.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The GoPass pilot project is anticipated to reduce Pasadena Transit fare revenue by \$225,000 over the two-year pilot period. Pasadena would be made partially whole by receiving a proportional amount of the cost-sharing revenues provided by participating school districts and colleges and by the one-time Metro supplemental funding.

**GoPass Funding Estimates**

<b>Funding</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Supplemental Funding (per ARPA from Metro to Pasadena)	\$ 172,000
Educational Institutions (pending confirmation)	\$ 38,000
Prop C Local Return Funding (Pasadena)	\$ 15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 225,000</b>

Respectfully submitted,



LAURA RUBIO-CORNEJO

Director

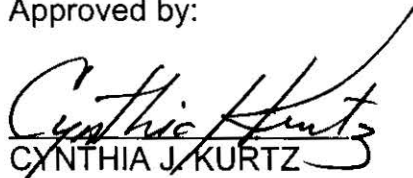
Department of Transportation

Prepared by:



Sebastián Andrés Hernández  
Principal Planner

Approved by:



CYNTHIA J. KURTZ  
Interim City Manager