

**Background Information – Motion by BCC / recommended by WRAC MTC:  
Oppose Further Study, an EIR and Implementation of the Metro  
Traffic Reduction Study (TRS) (aka Congestion Pricing) on the Westside**

**Proposed Motion:**

*The \_\_\_\_\_, a member of the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC), strongly opposes the implementation of Metro’s Traffic Reduction Study (TRS) project, (aka congestion pricing), on the I-10 west of the 405 and in the Santa Monica mountain passes on the Westside. This includes Sepulveda Blvd., Benedict Canyon, Roscomare Road, and Coldwater Canyon. We request that no recommendation be made to the Metro Board to further study or to begin an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in these areas until after the Sepulveda Transit Corridor (STC) project and Purple (D Line) Extension Transit Project on Wilshire Blvd. are completed and their impacts on traffic reduction can be determined.*

*Implementing congestion pricing in these areas before the completion of the STC and Purple (D Line) would simply displace cars from the freeways onto our already gridlocked streets. Without alternate modes of travel in place prior to implementation, we do not see how congestion pricing can achieve the desired goal of reduced vehicle trips. Merely displacing cars to side streets does not achieve the goal of the TRS.*

**Background/Justification:**

The Westside suffers from extreme traffic congestion during peak hours because:

- a. commuters from all over Los Angeles drive to jobs and appointments on the Westside, including Westwood, Santa Monica, Playa Vista and Venice
- b. the Westside lacks a robust public transit system that offers rapid, clean and safe travel with access to all of the Westside

There are two Metro projects that are poised to bring more transit options to the Westside. In the planning phase is the **Sepulveda Transit Corridor (STC)**, which will provide either monorail or subway service from the San Fernando Valley to LAX. In the construction phase is the **Purple (D Line) Extension Transit Project**, which will extend subway service down Wilshire Blvd. to the UCLA and the WLA VA campuses.

Metro has also proposed two more projects: the **Traffic Reduction Study (TRS) project**, which seeks to use congestion pricing on the Westside to reduce vehicle trips, and the **I-405 Express Lanes project**, which would convert existing freeway lanes into toll lanes.

The WRAC Mobility and Transportation Committee (MTC) has been discussing all four Metro projects for the past two years. The main concern raised by MTC members is the timeline for implementing these projects. Since May of 2023, the WRAC MTC has extended several invitations to Metro staff to come give a presentation about the Westside projects and engage in a Q&A about them. Our multiple invitations have been turned down. This is despite the fact that the Metro Board directed Metro staff to obtain community input on TRS.

Metro staff instead encouraged us to attend their Fall 2023 meetings about the STC and I-405 Express Lanes. There were a few boards on TRS at the in-person meetings, but TRS was not discussed during the meeting’s presentation by Metro staff. A few of our MTC members attended the sole Metro TRS webinar. This presentation covered all of the study areas, not just the Westside, and the time allocated for Q&A was too short. During the webinar, staff stated that TRS outreach received input from 200 community members.

Only the Brentwood Community Council (BCC) was able to schedule Metro to come and give their Board a presentation on TRS. A promised follow-up meeting to further discuss methodology, data and

to address questions has been cancelled by Metro staff.

**Metro Presentation handout:** <https://bit.ly/3SqrBvV>

**Letter from the BCC to Metro:** <http://bit.ly/4b0BIUK>

The consensus among WRAC MTC members is that the **TRS should be implemented after completion of both the Sepulveda Transit Corridor and the Purple (D Line) Extension Transit projects** and their impacts on traffic reduction can be determined. The success of congestion pricing in cities like London, Stockholm, and New York is in large part due to the excellent transit options that exist in those cities. Implementing TRS after completion of the STC and the Purple (D Line) gives commuters incentive to take these newly completed North/South and East/West public transit options.

Implementing congestion pricing before the completion of the STC and the Purple (D Line) would likely result in commuters redirecting their car trips from the freeways and streets targeted for congestions pricing onto other neighborhood streets. This is especially true for commuters traveling North/South to reach the Westside, who rely on driving because they currently don't have access to light rail, subway or dedicated bus lanes along these routes.

MTC members agree that **displacing cars off the freeways and onto side streets does not achieve the goal of the TRS project.** Traffic all over the Westside is already bad. Anyone driving between 3 and 7 PM is doing so out of necessity, not choice. The majority of commuters aren't able to change their work schedules to avoid commuting during congestion pricing times. Taxing anyone using a car during certain hours will only serve to incentivize people to reroute their vehicle trips to neighborhood streets avoid the new tolls.

We strongly object to further study and consideration of the Traffic Reduction Study (TRS) unless/until a more meaningful dialogue with the Westside communities affected by TRS is completed and a majority of these communities agree to such further study. Without this dialogue, the creation of sufficient Westside public transit options, and more transparency in the process - including access to the information underlying the study's assumptions and an explanation of the methodologies used - no further study should move forward.

*WRAC MTC – Chair Selena Inouye (member, VNC PTC)  
For WRAC board consideration on 1/22/24*