



Study Session Notice & Agenda

November 21, 2023

Joint Study Session Agenda
Valley Metro RPTA and Valley Metro Rail
Thursday, November 30, 2023
Board room/Webex
101 N. 1st Avenue, 10th Floor
11:15 a.m.

Study sessions provide a less formal setting for the Boards of Directors to discuss specific topics, at length, with each other and Valley Metro staff members. Work study session provide an opportunity for staff to receive direction from the Boards and for the public to observe the discussions.

At the request of the Boards of Directors, this study session will provide an overview of the Strategic Plan Development.

1. Strategic Plan Development Update

Guidehouse and Valley Metro staff will provide an update and obtain feedback from the Board on the incorporation of the September Board Retreat input into the draft FY 2025 – 2030 Strategic Plan.

Qualified sign language interpreters are available with 72 hours notice. Materials in alternative formats (large print, audit, or computer flash drive) are available upon request. For further information, please call Valley Metro at 602-262-7433 or TTY at 602-251-2039. To attend this meeting via teleconference, contact the receptionist at 602-262-7433 for the dial-in-information. The supporting information for this agenda can be found on our web site at www.valleymetro.org.



Information Summary

DATE

November 21, 2023

STUDY SESSION**SUBJECT**

Strategic Plan Development

PURPOSE

To update and obtain feedback from the Board on the incorporation of their September Board Retreat input into the draft FY 2025 – 2030 Strategic Plan

RECOMMENDATION

This item is presented for information only.

BACKGROUND | DISCUSSION | CONSIDERATION

In March 2023, the Board authorized Valley Metro to enter into a contract with Guidehouse Inc to assist in the development of a FY 2025 – 2030 Strategic Plan. Drawing on surveys with Valley residents; interviews with peer agencies, Board members, city staff and other stakeholders; and extensive data gathering and benchmarking; Guidehouse presented its Current State and Future State Assessments to Board members at the September Board retreat. This presentation proposed five goals and four key enablers as priorities for the five-year period. Input was sought on the goals, enablers, and the tactics to achieve them.

In this study session, Guidehouse will provide an update on the incorporation of the Board's input and seek additional feedback on the tactics proposed to achieve the goals and enablers. Valley Metro anticipates presenting the final FY 2025 – 2030 Strategic Plan to the Board for adoption in January 2024.

COST AND BUDGET

Funding for the development of the FY 2025 – 2030 Strategic Plan was included in the FY 2024 budget. Where required, funding to implement the approved plan's initiatives will be sought in the FY 2025 – 2030 budgets.

COMMITTEE ACTION

TMC/RMC: November 1, 2023 for information

Boards of Directors: November 30, 2023 for information

CONTACT

Jim Hillyard

Chief Administrative Officer

Jhillyard@valleymetro.org

ATTACHMENT

Valley Metro Strategic Plan Update

Valley Metro Strategic Planning Services

November Board Study Session

November 30, 2023



This project has entered the Implementation Planning Phase, in which Valley Metro is detailing tactics for realizing the Strategic Plan

	Current State Assessment	Future State Assessment	Strategic Framework	Implementation Plan
Status	Completed	Completed	Completed	In Progress
Key Questions	✓ How are riders experiencing Valley Metro's services? ✓ What are the critical pain points in Valley Metro's services and operations? ✓ How effectively does Valley Metro's org. structure and culture support its potential for success?	✓ What are key trends that are relevant to Valley Metro? ✓ What industry best practices are being employed? ✓ How can Valley Metro's ongoing initiatives be expanded or adapted to support its strategic goals?	✓ Given the identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, what should be Valley Metro's new strategic framework? ✓ Which specific actions and goals should be associated with each strategic priority?	□ How can the recommendations within the strategic framework be effectively implemented? □ What additional resources will be needed? □ What are the immediate priorities and next steps?

What we heard from the Board Retreat...

	Quotes from the Board		Initial Takeaways
 1 Deliver excellent customer experience	<i>“ By improving customer experience, we'll create political and voter support too. ”</i>	<i>“ First mile/last mile is hand in hand with on time service, if one thing is late, you miss your connection. ”</i>	• Agreement that this should be the single most important priority. • This priority is interconnected with all priority areas.
 2 Invest in our talent	<i>“ Analyzing data from hiring strategies to know what sticks. ”</i>	<i>“ Actual hands-on training and quarterly meetings with employees about development. ”</i>	• This priority is closely aligned to the Data and Tech priority, employees need to know how to use it. • Employees need continual training and development.
 3 Prioritize security on transit	<i>“ It is about the perception of security, do things look and feel safe, taken care of, clean? ”</i>	<i>“ Create a sense of community and belonging, this is a shared public space. ”</i>	• Voted as main priority to improve customer experience. • Focus on perception of security and physical infrastructure on/around transit.
 4 Leverage industry best practices and innovations on data and technology	<i>“ Need to invest in people to use data and technology, empowering them to make informed decisions with this information. ”</i>	<i>“ Use microtransit data to understand the bigger picture. ”</i>	• Closely aligned to the Talent priority, to ensure staff can properly use the data and technology. • Feeling that Valley Metro has the data and technology but may not be using it well.
 5 Deliver on stakeholder collaboration	<i>“ We need better storytelling. ”</i>	<i>“ We have to create value for stakeholders to use and invest in the system. ”</i>	• Strong desire to get the community and cities engaged to support Valley Metro, but first Valley Metro must provide and communicate real value to its stakeholders.
Magic Wand to Improve Regional Transit...	<i>“ We need a strong regional spine for all cities to connect to. ”</i>	<i>“ Expand access to the existing loop, end to end, with rail, bus, and microtransit. ”</i>	• Focus on developing a strong regional, connected, and multi-modal system. • Need innovative approach to bring future generations to transit / designing a transit system in a car-centric city.

...These ideas echoed some of the Strategic Framework Priority Areas

Priority Area	List of Initiatives	
1 Deliver excellent customer experience	1.1 Incorporate human centered design principles and practices into customer wayfinding and communications to ensure an easy-to-navigate regional system. 1.2 Prioritize a unified customer experience across various modes and services, moving from transactional to relational interactions. 1.3 Establish a holistic Customer Experience (CX) program and institutionalize customer experience across the organization.	1.4 Establish an “innovation lab” within CX, focused on developing solutions to enhance customer experience and create efficiencies. 1.5 Continue to innovate, integrate, and market mobility solutions (e.g., microtransit, customized service offerings, mobility hubs) to expand transit availability and equity.
2 Invest in our talent	2.1 Assess and understand the staffing needs of the agency to deliver Valley Metro’s mission and vision now and in the future. 2.2 Retain current employees through a workplace and culture that engages, supports, and develops staff. 2.3 Create structured paths for career growth within the organization, empower employees to explore these paths, and coach supervisors in how to support employee development. Invest in developing skills and abilities necessary for staff to advance.	2.4 Foster excitement about employment and growth opportunities with Valley Metro, our frontline contractors, and the transit industry overall. Engage underrepresented populations to provide pathways to job security and financial stability. Support the agency and our team by hiring personnel with the strengths, abilities, and diverse perspectives to meet Valley Metro’s workforce needs today and tomorrow.
3 Prioritize security on transit	3.1 Continue to expand partnerships with police departments of member cities to increase the monitoring and security of the system. 3.2 Create a security culture that facilitates safety and security engagement and support at all levels. 3.3 Invest in a community partnership initiative that includes trained personnel (e.g., social workers) to support vulnerable populations, with an overall increased visible presence from the nontraditional security workforce.	3.4 Evaluate the physical infrastructure and security of regional transit assets and stations and make necessary improvements (e.g., crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED): better lighting, restrict hiding places, enhance security monitoring systems).
4 Leverage industry best practices and innovations on data and technology	4.1 Improve the automation and reliability of transit data to strengthen planning, operations, and rider communications (e.g., resolve data quality issues with passenger counts, establish a regional reporting platform). 4.2 Understand customer interactions through the enterprise capture, integration and data analysis to better serve riders. 4.3 Use analysis of route data and commuter patterns to determine best-practice strategies to improve transit performance and safety (e.g., transit signal priority, queue jumps, bus lanes).	4.4 Work with member cities and stakeholders to improve data sharing and access mobility data from private providers to inform service planning. 4.5 Utilize Enterprise Asset Management to improve system performance and decrease asset life-cycle costs.
5 Deliver on stakeholder collaboration	5.1 Expand open and transparent communication channels with staff and frontline workers, providing ample opportunities to share feedback and new ideas. 5.2 Incorporate member agency and stakeholder input into action plans to build the future regional transit system.	5.3 Engage and diversify third-party contractors and consultants for collaborative success on shared projects, setting clear expectations and priorities. 5.4 Incorporate community voices in Valley Metro’s portfolio of programs and projects, particularly feedback from diverse/hard-to-reach communities.

...Which are themselves supported by the foundational Enablers

6 Strong Leadership and Execution

- 6.1** Strengthen ownership and accountability by assigning a sponsor for each goal, ensuring increased buy-in and focused, data-driven execution.
- 6.2** Engage staff at all levels by communicating and connecting the strategic plan to their work.
- 6.3** Integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) principles into the organization by examining how DEI influences and shapes each of the strategic goal areas.
- 6.4** Embed problem solving and process improvement into Valley Metro management through dedicated effort on process optimization and change management strategies to encourage continuous improvement and increased efficiency.

7 Board Governance

- 7.1** Update the Board of Directors' onboarding program, define engagement opportunities and refresh orientation of roles and responsibilities, agency priorities, current performance and financial information and expectations.
- 7.2** The Board and CEO will regularly assess board structure and engagement opportunities and adapt, as needed, to facilitate effective governance within the transit/mobility space.
- 7.3** Obtain policy guidance from the Boards through regular updates on strategic plan progress, and other performance and financial information with member agencies, sharing high-level information and offering more detailed data to facilitate board support and understanding.
- 7.4** Emphasize shared duties, responsibilities and facilitate work across regional bodies (e.g., RPTA, member cities, MAG) to be effective advocates for transit and mobility solutions across the Valley.

8 Operational Excellence

- 8.1** Optimize service performance to meet current and evolving regional travel needs.
- 8.2** Codify a comprehensive maintenance and operations program delivering effective transit service with the ability to grow and adapt through FY 2030.
- 8.3** Improve service quality through enhanced planning, performance management and continuous process improvement.
- 8.4** Formalize a long-range operations and capital investment plan for the next 20 years aligned with state of good repair and future system and generational needs.
- 8.5** Optimize service performance to meet current and evolving regional travel needs.

[1] Dependent of the passage of Prop 400e.



Customer Experience | Overview of Initiative and summary of implementation

Customer Experience	Initiative
	1.1 Incorporate human-centered design principles and practices into customer wayfinding and communications to ensure an easy-to-navigate regional system.
	1.2 Prioritize a unified customer experience across various modes and services, moving from transactional to relational interactions.
	1.3 Establish a holistic Customer Experience (CX) program and institutionalize customer experience across the organization.
	1.4 Establish an “innovation lab” within CX, focused on developing solutions to enhance customer experience and create efficiencies.
	1.5 Continue to innovate, integrate, and market mobility solutions (e.g., microtransit, customized service offerings, mobility hubs) to expand transit availability and equity.



Invest in Talent | Overview of Initiative and summary of implementation

Initiative

2.1 Assess and understand the staffing needs of the agency to deliver Valley Metro's mission and vision now and in the future.

2.2 Retain current employees through a workplace and culture that engages, supports, and develops staff.

2.3 Create structured paths for career growth within the organization, empower employees to explore these paths, and coach supervisors in how to support employee development. Invest in developing skills and abilities necessary for staff to advance.

2.4 Foster excitement about employment and growth opportunities with Valley Metro, our frontline contractors, and the transit industry overall. Engage underrepresented populations to provide pathways to job security and financial stability. Support the agency and our team by hiring personnel with the strengths, abilities, and diverse perspectives to meet Valley Metro's workforce needs today and tomorrow.



Security | Overview of Initiative and summary of implementation

Prioritize Security on Transit

Initiative

3.1 Continue to expand partnerships with police departments of member cities to increase the monitoring and security of the system.

3.2 Create a safety and security culture that facilitates engagement and support at all levels.

3.3 Invest in a community partnership initiative that includes trained personnel (e.g., social workers) to support vulnerable populations, with an overall increased visible presence from the nontraditional security workforce.

3.4 Evaluate the physical infrastructure and security of regional transit assets and stations and make necessary improvements (e.g., crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED): better lighting, restrict hiding places, enhance security monitoring systems).



Data and Technology | Overview of Initiative and summary of implementation

Initiative

- 4.1** Improve the automation and reliability of transit data to strengthen planning, operations, and rider communications (e.g., resolve data quality issues with passenger counts, establish a regional reporting platform).
- 4.2** Understand customer interaction through the enterprise capture, integration and data analysis to better serve riders.
- 4.3** Use analysis of route data and commuter patterns to determine best-practice strategies to improve transit performance and safety (e.g., transit signal priority, queue jumps, bus lanes).
- 4.4** Work with member cities and stakeholders to improve data sharing and access mobility data from private providers to inform service planning.
- 4.5** Utilize Enterprise Asset Management to improve system performance and decrease asset life-cycle costs.

Leverage Data & Technology



Stakeholder Collaboration | Overview of Initiative and summary of implementation

Deliver on Stakeholder Collaboration

Initiative

- 5.1** Expand open and transparent communication channels with staff and frontline workers, providing ample opportunities to share feedback and new ideas.
- 5.2** Incorporate member agency and stakeholder input into action plans to build the future regional transit system.
- 5.3** Engage and diversify third-party contractors and consultants for collaborative success on shared projects, setting clear expectations and priorities.
- 5.4** Incorporate community voices in Valley Metro's portfolio of programs and projects, particularly feedback from diverse/hard-to-reach communities.



Anything significant missing from these Initiatives in order to move the needle on customer experience?

Priority Area	List of Initiatives	
1 Deliver excellent customer experience	1.1 Incorporate human centered design principles and practices into customer wayfinding and communications to ensure an easy-to-navigate regional system. 1.2 Prioritize a unified customer experience across various modes and services, moving from transactional to relational interactions. 1.3 Establish a holistic Customer Experience (CX) program and institutionalize customer experience across the organization.	1.4 Establish an “innovation lab” within CX, focused on developing solutions to enhance customer experience and create efficiencies. 1.5 Continue to innovate, integrate, and market mobility solutions (e.g., microtransit, customized service offerings, mobility hubs) to expand transit availability and equity.
2 Invest in our talent	2.1 Assess and understand the staffing needs of the agency to deliver Valley Metro’s mission and vision now and in the future. 2.2 Retain current employees through a workplace and culture that engages, supports, and develops staff. 2.3 Create structured paths for career growth within the organization, empower employees to explore these paths, and coach supervisors in how to support employee development. Invest in developing skills and abilities necessary for staff to advance.	2.4 Foster excitement about employment and growth opportunities with Valley Metro, our frontline contractors, and the transit industry overall. Engage underrepresented populations to provide pathways to job security and financial stability. Support the agency and our team by hiring personnel with the strengths, abilities, and diverse perspectives to meet Valley Metro’s workforce needs today and tomorrow.
3 Prioritize security on transit	3.1 Continue to expand partnerships with police departments of member cities to increase the monitoring and security of the system. 3.2 Create a security culture that facilitates safety and security engagement and support at all levels. 3.3 Invest in a community partnership initiative that includes trained personnel (e.g., social workers) to support vulnerable populations, with an overall increased visible presence from the nontraditional security workforce.	3.4 Evaluate the physical infrastructure and security of regional transit assets and stations and make necessary improvements (e.g., crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED): better lighting, restrict hiding places, enhance security monitoring systems).
4 Leverage industry best practices and innovations on data and technology	4.1 Improve the automation and reliability of transit data to strengthen planning, operations, and rider communications (e.g., resolve data quality issues with passenger counts, establish a regional reporting platform). 4.2 Understand customer interactions through the enterprise capture, integration and data analysis to better serve riders. 4.3 Use analysis of route data and commuter patterns to determine best-practice strategies to improve transit performance and safety (e.g., transit signal priority, queue jumps, bus lanes).	4.4 Work with member cities and stakeholders to improve data sharing and access mobility data from private providers to inform service planning. 4.5 Utilize Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) to improve system performance and decrease asset life-cycle costs.
5 Deliver on stakeholder collaboration	5.1 Expand open and transparent communication channels with staff and frontline workers, providing ample opportunities to share feedback and new ideas. 5.2 Incorporate member agency and stakeholder input into action plans to build the future regional transit system.	5.3 Engage and diversify third-party contractors and consultants for collaborative success on shared projects, setting clear expectations and priorities. 5.4 Incorporate community voices in Valley Metro’s portfolio of programs and projects, particularly feedback from diverse/hard-to-reach communities.



Leadership & Execution | Overview of Foundational Goal and implementation

Initiative

6.1 Strengthen ownership and accountability by assigning a sponsor for each goal, ensuring increased buy-in and focused, data-driven execution.

6.2 Engage staff at all levels by communicating and connecting the strategic plan to their work.

6.3 Integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) principles into the organization by examining how DEI influences and shapes each of the strategic goal areas.

6.4 Embed problem solving and process improvement into Valley Metro management through dedicated effort on process optimization and change management strategies to encourage continuous improvement and increased efficiency.

Leadership & Execution



Board Governance | Overview of Foundational Goal and implementation

Initiative

7.1 Update the Board of Directors' onboarding program, define engagement opportunities and refresh orientation of roles and responsibilities, agency priorities, current performance and financial information and expectations.

7.2 The Board and CEO will regularly assess board structure and engagement opportunities and adapt, as needed, to facilitate effective overnance within the transit/mobility space.

7.3 Obtain policy guidance from the Boards through regular updates on strategic plan progress, and other performance and financial information with member agencies, sharing high-level information and offering more detailed data to facilitate board support and understanding.

7.4 Emphasize shared duties, responsibilities and facilitate work across regional bodies (e.g., RPTA, member cities, MAG) to be effective advocates for transit and mobility solutions across the Valley.

Board Governance



Operational Excellence | Overview of Foundational Goal and implementation

Operational Excellence

Initiative

8.1 Optimize service performance to meet current and evolving regional travel needs

8.2 Codify a comprehensive maintenance and operations program delivering effective transit service with the ability to grow and adapt through FY 2030.

8.3 Improve service quality through enhanced planning, performance management and continuous process improvement.

8.4 Formalize a long-range operations and capital investment plan for the next 20 years aligned with state of good repair and future system and generational needs.



Financial Sustainability | Overview of Foundational Goal and implementation

Financial Sustainability

Initiative

9.1 Develop and maintain short and long-term financial forecasts and cash reserve policies to ensure an ongoing financially balanced program.

9.2 Support effective transit system design by identifying opportunities to improve or pursue resource allocation, fare collection enhancements, alternative service delivery models, and innovative mobility technologies to ensure sustainable lifecycle costs.

9.3 Maximize revenue generation, including advertising, farebox recovery, and discretionary/competitive grant opportunities.

9.4 For procurements, define the general scope of work and then support that with flexible language to achieve or meet the general scope and avoid restrictive requirements. Seek opportunities to create transparency of planned procurement activities by providing a two-year look ahead and employ efficiencies that reduce the procurement timeline.

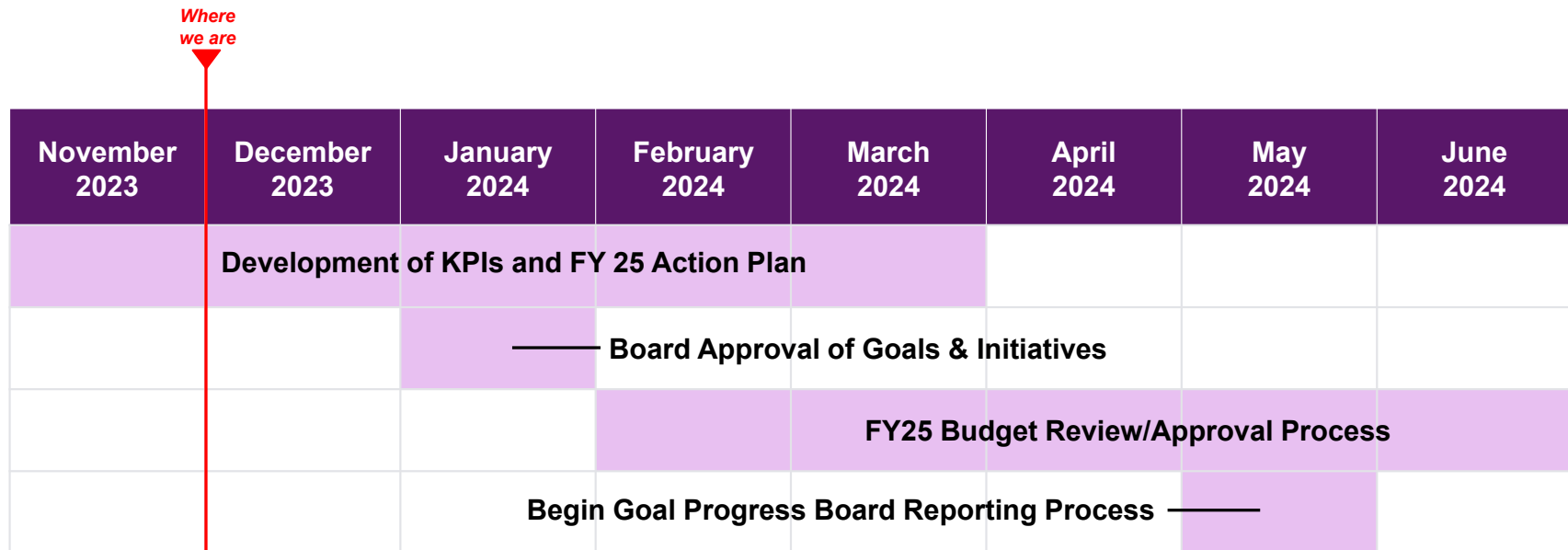
9.5 Engage leadership team to proactively identify cost saving measures and implement resource justification during annual budget process.



Anything significant missing from these initiatives in order to move the needle on customer experience?

Foundational Goal	Conditions
Strong Leadership and Execution	6.1 Strengthen ownership and accountability by assigning a sponsor for each goal, ensuring increased buy-in and focused, data-driven execution. 6.2 Engage staff at all levels by communicating and connecting the strategic plan to their work. 6.3 Integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) principles into the organization by examining how DEI influences and shapes each of the strategic goal areas. 6.4 Embed problem solving and process improvement into Valley Metro management through dedicated effort on process optimization and change management strategies to encourage continuous improvement and increased efficiency.
Board Governance	7.1 Update the Board of Directors' onboarding program, define engagement opportunities and refresh orientation of roles and responsibilities, agency priorities, current performance and financial information and expectations. 7.2 The Board and CEO will regularly assess board structure and engagement opportunities and adapt, as needed, to facilitate effective governance within the transit/mobility space. 7.3 Obtain policy guidance from the Boards through regular updates on strategic plan progress, and other performance and financial information with member agencies, sharing high-level information and offering more detailed data to facilitate board support and understanding. 7.4 Emphasize shared duties, responsibilities and facilitate work across regional bodies (e.g., RPTA, member cities, MAG) to be effective advocates for transit and mobility solutions across the Valley.
Operational Excellence	8.1 Optimize service performance to meet current and evolving regional travel needs. 8.2 Codify a comprehensive maintenance and operations program delivering effective transit service with the ability to grow and adapt through FY 2030. 8.3 Improve service quality through enhanced planning, performance management and continuous process improvement. 8.4 Formalize a long-range operations and capital investment plan for the next 20 years aligned with state of good repair and future system and generational needs.
Financial Sustainability	9.1 Develop and maintain short and long-term financial forecasts and cash reserve policies to ensure an ongoing financially balanced program. 9.2 Support effective transit system design by identifying opportunities to improve or pursue resource allocation, fare collection enhancements, alternative service delivery models, and innovative mobility technologies to ensure sustainable lifecycle costs. 9.3 Maximize revenue generation, including advertising, farebox recovery, and discretionary/competitive grant opportunities. 9.4 For procurements, define the general scope of work and then support that with flexible language to achieve or meet the general scope and avoid restrictive requirements. Seek opportunities to create transparency of planned procurement activities by providing a two-year look ahead and employ efficiencies that reduce the procurement timeline. 9.5 Engage leadership team to proactively identify cost saving measures and implement resource justification during annual budget process.

Key Next Steps | Following this study session, Valley Metro will lead next steps in close collaboration with the Board



Goal Progress Board Reporting Cycle

