



## Board Report

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**File #:** 2026-0120, **File Type:** Ordinance / Administrative Code

**Agenda Number:** 21.

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**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
MARCH 19, 2026**

**SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF CODE OF CONDUCT FOR METRO ADVISORY BODIES**

**ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

APPROVE amendment of Title 5 (Ethics) of Metro’s Administrative Code to include the “Code of Conduct for Metro Advisory Bodies” (Attachment A), applicable to all members of Metro’s advisory bodies.

**ISSUE**

Metro’s advisory bodies provide important input and advice to Metro staff and the Board of Directors on a range of policy, planning, operational, and community issues. Currently, there is no unified, formal Code of Conduct that applies consistently across all Metro advisory bodies.

The absence of a clear, uniform standard can lead to inconsistent expectations, uncertainty in addressing misconduct, and potential risk to Metro’s reputation and to the effectiveness of advisory bodies. Further, and most significantly, written expectations on professionalism to maintain a respectful and productive environment will minimize opportunities for misconduct by advisory body members. This Code helps ensure that disruptive activity is minimized so that advisory body members and Metro Staff are not subject to unwarranted, unwelcome, and problematic behavior that creates liability for Metro.

**BACKGROUND**

Metro’s advisory bodies, including but not limited to: the Community/Citizens’ Advisory Council, Transportation Business Advisory Council, Technical Advisory Committee and its subcommittees, Public Safety Advisory Committee, Accessibility Advisory Committee, Sustainability Council, Policy Advisory Council, Public Liability/Property Damage Claims Committee, Metro Youth Council, and Community Leadership Councils, play an important role in advising Metro.

These bodies are advisory only; they do not make governmental decisions under state law. Because of this fact, Metro advisory bodies historically have not had a uniform and consistent code of conduct apply to them in the same way that Metro employees, contractors, and Board Members do. Nonetheless, advisory body members often engage directly with the public, Metro staff, and the

Board, and their conduct can shape public perception of Metro and influence the effectiveness of Metro actions.

Metro employees and Board Members are already subject to a professional code of conduct through Metro's existing codes and related agency policies. The absence of a comparable framework for advisory bodies creates an inconsistency in expectations despite the important role these bodies play in Metro governance and public engagement.

Public Utilities Code § 130610 directs the Chief Ethics Officer to create agency codes of conduct that are subject to approval by the Metro Board.

## **DISCUSSION**

The proposed Code of Conduct (Attachment A) is intended to:

- Establish clear expectations for professionalism and conduct in all advisory body activities, including maintaining a safe, respectful, and productive environment.
- Affirm Metro's commitment to nondiscrimination by prohibiting derogatory or offensive comments related to protected characteristics during advisory body work.
- Address abusive conduct by requiring respectful treatment of Metro employees, advisory body colleagues, and members of the public, and prohibiting egregious verbal attacks.
- Clarify expectations regarding confidential information, prohibiting its use or disclosure except in the performance of advisory body duties.
- Define appropriate use of Metro resources, ensuring that facilities, materials, equipment, information, intellectual property, and staff time are used solely in connection with advisory body duties.
- Establish the Code as controlling over any conflicting advisory body bylaw that is currently in effect.
- Provide a process for suspension and removal of members who violate the Code.
- Assign the Ethics Officer responsibility for advising on ethical issues and questions involving interpretation and application of the Code - something advisory bodies have historically requested.

While the Code establishes clear standards and enforcement mechanisms, Metro's intent is to address most concerns through de-escalation and corrective guidance. Staff will typically seek to resolve issues informally by reminding members of the Code and encouraging respectful participation before pursuing formal disciplinary processes. Escalation to suspension or removal would generally occur only if problematic conduct continues after these efforts or involves serious misconduct.

Notably, the Ethics Department conducted extensive research across many jurisdictions in California to inform standards set in the proposed Code. As an example, many of the general principles mirror the Bay Area Rapid Transit's (BART) advisory body code.

## **DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT**

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This action will not have a direct impact on the safety of Metro employees or customers; however, it will improve the professional work environment for Metro advisory bodies, Metro employees, and the public.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Adoption of this Code of Conduct will not have a financial impact. Implementation will be carried out using existing staff resources as part of advisory body administration and Ethics Department compliance functions.

No additional funding is required.

### **EQUITY PLATFORM**

The adoption of this Code supports the “Train and Grow” pillar of Metro’s Equity Platform by creating standards of conduct that set universal expectations regarding nondiscrimination to ensure a safe, inclusive environment not only for a diverse advisory body membership but also for Metro staff.

### **VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED OUTCOME**

VMT and VMT per capita in Los Angeles County are lower than national averages, the lowest in the SCAG region, and on the lower end of VMT per capita statewide, with these declining VMT trends due in part to Metro’s significant investment in rail and bus transit.\* Metro’s Board-adopted VMT reduction targets align with California’s statewide climate goals, including achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. To ensure continued progress, all Board items are assessed for their potential impact on VMT.

While this item does not directly encourage taking transit, sharing a ride, or using active transportation, it affects Metro operations, as it will encourage Metro’s advisory bodies to meet in a professional environment, increasing membership and participation without increasing VMT. Because the Metro Board has adopted an agency-wide VMT Reduction Target, and this item supports the overall function of the agency, this item is consistent with the goals of reducing VMT.

\*Based on population estimates from the United States Census and VMT estimates from Caltrans’ Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) data between 2001-2019.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

Goal #5: Provide responsive, accountable, and trustworthy governance within the Metro organization.

### **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

Do Not Adopt a Formal Code of Conduct: Under this alternative, advisory bodies would continue to operate without a unified code. This is not recommended because it would maintain inconsistent expectations across bodies and limit Metro’s ability to respond consistently to misconduct.

### **NEXT STEPS**

If the Board approves the recommendation, Title 5 of Metro's Administrative Code will be amended to include this Code of Conduct. Staff will distribute the Code to all advisory body members and include it in all future appointment and onboarding processes. Advisory Bodies will also have the opportunity to review, ask questions, and receive training on the Code. Staff in consultation with the Chief Ethics Officer, will finalize internal procedures for documenting alleged violations, initiating suspensions, and coordinating with nominating authorities on removal decisions.

**ATTACHMENT**

Attachment A - Exhibit A: Code of Conduct for Advisory Bodies

Prepared by: Paul Solis, Chief Ethics Officer (213) 922-2944

Reviewed by: Paul Solis, Chief Ethics Officer, (213) 922-2944

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Solis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.