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Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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**PLANNING & PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
JANUARY 16, 2013**

**SUBJECT: METRO GOLD LINE 1ST/SOTO STATION CONCEPTUAL
DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES**

ACTION: ADOPT CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the attached "Conceptual Development Guidelines" for the Metro Gold Line 1st/Soto Station site and the Metro-owned parcel on the opposite corner. (See Attachment A)

ISSUE

Metro owns, maintains and operates properties throughout Los Angeles County for its current and future transportation operations. As part of Metro's Joint Development Program, staff periodically evaluates these properties for potential joint development uses. Metro's joint development policy calls for the preparation of conceptual development guidelines prior to solicitation of development proposals for the site.

Development guidelines for Metro-owned parcels at this station were adopted by the Board in December 2003. These updated proposed conceptual development guidelines are intended to provide basic guidance to developers consistent with Metro's general policies, operations, and joint development policies and procedures.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The recommended action is consistent with Metro's Joint Development Policies and Procedures.

OPTIONS

Metro could choose not to adopt the proposed Conceptual Development Guidelines. Staff is not recommending this because the proposed guidelines are necessary to

advance joint development in a manner consistent with Metro operations, adopted policies, and local planning and land use ordinance. Further, these guidelines were based on the Community Linkages Study of the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, recent updates of land uses and area demographic and socio-economic profiles, and a community meeting held by staff on December 6, 2012.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

Approval of this item will have no impact on safety because no changes or physical improvements will be constructed as a result of adopting these conceptual development guidelines.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The recommended action will not impact Metro's FY13 Budget. Ultimately, development of the Metro-owned properties will generate revenues that may be used for capital and operating expenses.

BACKGROUND

The 1st/Soto Station is part of the six-mile Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension from Union Station to Atlantic Avenue. This segment added seven stations to the Metro Gold Line and extended service from Sierra Madre Villa in Pasadena to Atlantic Avenue without needing a transfer. The Eastside Extension opened in November 2009 and provides service to Little Tokyo, Boyle Heights, and East Los Angeles. (See Metro Gold Line Map in Attachment A, "Conceptual Development Guidelines.")

The Gold Line Eastside Extension planning document included a community linkages study. The Community Linkages Study identified guidelines for the future development of the stations along the Gold Line Eastside Extension, including 1st/Soto. The study included extensive input from the community and was unanimously approved by the Metro Gold Line Eastside Review Authority Committee. Findings from this study were presented and discussed with various stakeholders at public meetings and with local officials. These findings, including recent land use updates, provide the bases for the currently proposed conceptual development guidelines.

Properties covered by these guidelines include the Metro station site and a separate parcel. The first parcel is approximately 0.95 acres and includes the station entrance and the surrounding plaza. It is located at the southwest corner of East 1st Street, and South Soto Street. The second parcel is approximately 0.29 acres and is located immediately across Soto Street. (See Parcel Map in Attachment A, "Conceptual Development Guidelines.")

Metro envisions a multi-use project at Parcel 1 and a compatible single use at Parcel 2. Findings from the Community Linkages Study and a recent update conducted by staff in a community meeting held on December 6, 2012 indicate the need for housing and

commercial/retail development in the area. The need for both multi-family for-sale and for-rent housing was expressed by the community. Demand for affordable and senior housing was also noted.

NEXT STEPS

After adoption of the Conceptual Development Guidelines, Metro staff will issue a Request for Proposals for the development of the Metro properties at the Gold Line 1st/Soto Station and across Soto Street.

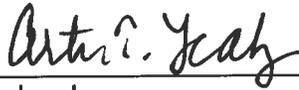
ATTACHMENT

A. Metro Gold Line 1st/Soto Station Conceptual Development Guidelines

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LOS ANGELES COUNTY METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

**METRO GOLD LINE 1st/SOTO STATION
CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES**

A. SITE DESCRIPTION

The 1st/Soto Station is part of the six-mile Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension from Union Station to Atlantic Avenue. This segment added seven stations to the Metro Gold Line and extended service from Sierra Madre Villa in Pasadena to Atlantic Avenue without needing a transfer. The Eastside Extension opened in November 2009 and provides service to Little Tokyo, Boyle Heights, and East Los Angeles. (See Attachment A, Metro Gold Line Map)

MTA properties covered by these guidelines include the station site and a separate parcel. The first parcel is approximately 0.95 acres and includes the station entrance located on the southwest corner of East 1st Street and South Soto Street, including approximately 207 feet of frontage along Soto and 200 feet of frontage along 1st. The second parcel is situated immediately across Soto from the station on the southeast corner of 1st and Soto, and contains a land area of 0.29 acres, with approximately 150 feet of frontage along 1st Street and approximately 83 feet of frontage on Soto Street. (See Attachment A, Parcel Map)

B. AREA CONTEXT

There are a limited number of land uses adjacent to and surrounding the two parcels. (See Attachment A, Site Context) The surrounding land use is predominately residential. Neighborhood serving commercial uses and community facilities are located in the immediate vicinity along 1st Street. There will remain a high level of bus stop activities at these locations. The land uses immediately adjacent to the parcel(s) include commercial uses along the frontage of 1st Street and residential uses to the west, south and east of the parcels.

C. AREA PLANS AND ZONING

Based upon the Boyle Heights Plan Area adopted by the City of Los Angeles, Parcel 1 is zoned C2-1 and RD1.5 and Parcel 2 is zoned C2-1.

D. DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

These conceptual guidelines are intended to provide a set of development and planning principles that are applicable to the site and consistent with Metro's adopted Joint Development Policies and Procedures. The guidelines are not intended to provide specific design and construction-related criteria associated with a particular project. They are meant to provide the first step in a series of steps towards planning, developing and constructing a joint development project. (See Attachment A, MTA's Joint Development Process)

The Gold Line Eastside Extension planning document included a community linkages study. The Community Linkages Study's main objective was to identify, plan, and implement urban design concepts and strategies to maximize integration of the light rail stations with the communities they will serve. In addition, the study included potential uses that could be included in future joint developments at applicable stations. Findings from this study were presented and discussed with various stakeholders at public meetings as well as with local officials. These findings, along with recent land use and socio-economic updates, provide the bases for the following development guidelines.

1. Urban Design

Proposed development shall adhere to urban design principles that achieve the following goals:

- a. **Promote transit:** Through coordination with Metro and the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation, the development should enhance public transit by supporting the integration of available transit modes, especially in the immediate vicinity of the station.
- b. **Maintain and enhance existing residential neighborhoods:** Development should be sensitive to existing neighborhoods and surrounding areas.
- c. **Create a sense of place:** Development should create a location that is vibrant, visually pleasing, and generally improves the urban fabric and district of which it is a part.
- d. **Provide a secure environment:** The design and operation of proposed development uses shall promote safety for transit patrons, potential private development patrons, and adjacent uses.

2. Land Use

The 1st/Soto light rail station is below grade, and opened to the public in 2009. Transit oriented commercial/retail uses are recommended for these parcels. Since the parcels are relatively small, the development concept envisions approximately 8,000 square feet of new businesses that would cater to transit patrons and the broader neighborhood. Mixed use housing/commercial is a possibility.

3. Housing

The need for both multi-family for-sale and for-rent housing was expressed by the community. Demand for affordable and senior housing was also noted.

4. Commercial/Retail

Commercial and retail businesses could include small eateries and retail, with outdoor eating and seating areas, creating pedestrian activity at the transit plaza. The area has high pedestrian activity and the development of a retail center with small commercial uses would be appropriate at the station site.

5. Metro Transit Station Facilities

Metro Station: The 1st and Soto is located underground. Any proposed development that will alter this station or its location shall ensure that the design and function of the station are maintained. Metro reserves the right to approve such modifications.

Transit and Bicycle Parking: Current provisions shall be restored and future capacity required, if any, shall be provided in future joint development.

E. COMMUNITY MEETING

On December 6, 2012, Metro staff held a meeting with the Boyle Heights community seeking input regarding Metro's desire to develop the Property. The meeting was well attended. Comments received from the community, included the desire for the following uses in Boyle Heights (Comments not Specific to the Property) and at the Property (Comments Specific to the Property)¹:

Comments Not Specific to the Property:

- Grocery store/market
- Movie theatre
- Restaurant
- Affordable housing
- No more affordable housing
- Street vending uses
- No street vending uses
- Laundromat
- Health club/fitness facility
- Secure bicycle parking

Comments Specific to the Property:

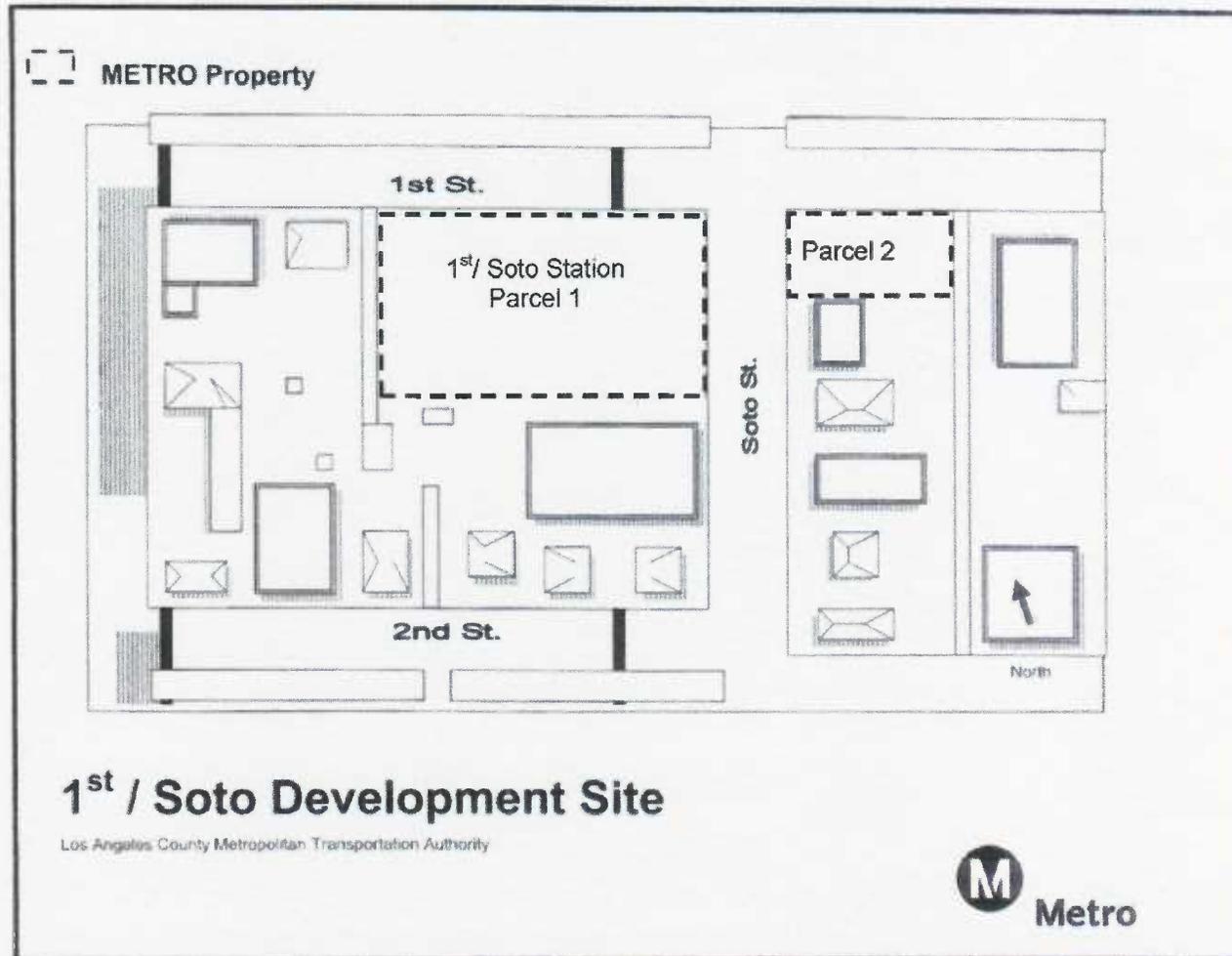
- None

¹ Note that some of the comments conflict with one another and may or may not be permissible uses under applicable legal authority and/or policy, but are presented unedited as received.

METRO GOLD LINE MAP



PARCEL MAP



SITE CONTEXT



JOINT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

METRO'S JOINT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

