

1 Whitman Lam, followed by Jim Shafer, followed by  
2 Joel Covarrubias.

3 WHITMAN LAM: Hi my name is Whitman Lam. I'm a  
4 member of the Transit Coalition. Now, I mean, look at other  
5 cities. You know, we have been to other cities; right?  
6 And, you know, you see how useful their transit systems are,  
7 how efficient they are, how many people are using them.

8 Not just, you know, just on the weekends, but  
9 actually using them in their daily lives. I've been to  
10 New York. I've been to Boston. I've been to San Francisco,  
11 London, Paris, you know, Berlin. And I mean, it's a totally  
12 different world out there.

13 And none of the people here -- a lot of us an  
14 Angelinos don't realize that way of life, you know. London  
15 has an underground. New York City, underground. Okay.  
16 Paris, underground. Why not us? Why do we have low  
17 expectations for transit systems?

18 You know, I think that we need to invest more.  
19 I think that people -- you know, this is a good thing.  
20 People are here. People know the importance of mass  
21 transportation. You know, all of you bring your friends,  
22 bring your family next time, okay.

23 You know what, let's get on the bus. Let's get  
24 on the train. Okay. Let's get the city moving. This is a

25

very positive thing to have all you guys here. And you know,

1 I think that, you know, when we empower ourselves, when we  
2 come to these meetings, when we bring out ideas, you know,  
3 ideas -- I mean, all over the world, Tokyo.

4 Everywhere they've already got their thing built.  
5 Okay. They've got their, you know, they're connecting  
6 systems. They've got high speed rails, which we don't have.  
7 I mean, they have trains that actually go to the airport,  
8 not just stop, like, a mile away. Come on, let's hop on  
9 the bandwagon on here. Yeah, go team.

10 ANN KERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Lam. Jim Shafer, followed  
11 by Joel Covarrubias. And again, I invite anyone that would  
12 like to make a comment, raise your hand, we will get you a  
13 comment card.

14 JIM SHAFER: Hi, my is Jim Shafer. I want to speak  
15 very enthusiastically in favor of the project in general,  
16 especially the underground alternative.

17 I live a couple of blocks away from -- well, I  
18 live at Fourth and Main, so this would be incredibly useful  
19 to me and all the other people who live downtown or moved  
20 downtown in the last ten years. Not to mention the people  
21 who already were living there.

22 And the idea of having a train go down Alameda  
23 to Washington is a great idea, but to me, in addition to

24           this project, to give more access to parts of downtown. And  
25           I also like the station placement that you're thinking of.

1           Especially the one serving Bunker Hill and the office  
2           workers up there and the cultural buildings, Disney Hall  
3           Music Center, as well as the one right by the new police  
4           station at Second and Main and the one over by the library.

5                        So I've also lived in a place that has really  
6           good public transportation. I lived in Mexico City for  
7           three years. It's not a perfect system, but it is very  
8           easy to get around the city using their Metro. Like, I  
9           don't know, 200 stations that cost a dime, and you can  
10          transfer as many times as you want. So I also agree to  
11          move in that direction. Thanks.

12                      ANN KERMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Shafer. Next I  
13          have Joel Covarrubias. And again, I invite anyone that  
14          would like to speak, raise your hand, we will get you a  
15          speaker card.

16                      JOEL COVARRUBIAS: Hi, I don't have any prepared  
17          remarks. I just dropped in here, but I did -- I am a long  
18          time transit rider. I took the Blue Line on it's first day  
19          and was disappointed when I only got to Pico Station.  
20          Didn't quite make it all the way underground. And it took  
21          a little while before they eventually built it all the way  
22          under to Metro center.

23                      And even when that happened -- even when that  
24          opened up, you know, you couldn't help but think about the

possibilities of just continuing on to Pasadena. They had

1 the little sign up there at the top that said, "Blue Line  
2 to Pasadena." Eventually, they -- I don't know if they  
3 took that out or what.

4           Anyway, it will be good to see this train  
5 when it eventually gets built. Travel all the way through  
6 downtown and get to the other side. It's a long time  
7 coming. And as other people have said, you know, this  
8 is a no-brainer.

9           You know, this is the type of thing that other  
10 cities have had for decades. So, it's real good to see  
11 all of the enthusiasm in L.A. right now for transit  
12 measure or passing.

13           So let's not skimp on it. Let's do it right.  
14 Let's put it underground. I like the underground option.  
15 It hits some good locations, Bunker Hill, the Central  
16 Library, the City Hall, all of that. So let's do it  
17 right and not cut corners. Thank you.

18           ANN KERMAN: Thank you very much. Well, it's now 7:30.  
19 We are going to be here until 8:00 o'clock. So if anybody  
20 else is brave enough to come to the mic, we'd be delighted  
21 to hear from you.

22           If you prefer to put your comments in writing,  
23 again, we will be here for another half hour. Take the  
24 time. Write them out for us. There will certainly be

other ways for you to be in touch with us. Again, we



1           are taking comments through May 11th and we want you to  
2           stay informed with this project.

3                        So to do so, you may log into our web site.  
4           It is Metro.net/regionalconnector. We will be engaged  
5           in the community throughout the process. So stay tuned  
6           because there will be further follow-up meetings for all  
7           of you that would like to attend.

8                        And make sure that we have your correct contact  
9           information at the registration desk so we can keep you on  
10          our e-mail list; keep you posted when our following meetings  
11          will be. And again, feel free to check in at the web site.

12                       So with that, we're here. The boards are in  
13          the back. There's cookies, coffee, water. So please,  
14          help yourself and I thank you all for being here tonight.

15                       (Proceedings concluded at 8:00 p.m.)

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BEFORE THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
REGIONAL CONNECTOR TRANSIT CORRIDOR PROJECT TEAM

Public Hearing in the Matter of:     )  
  )  
REGIONAL CONNECTOR TRANSIT            )  
CORRIDOR PROJECT                         )  
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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Los Angeles, California

Wednesday, April 1, 2009

Reported by:

MELISSA TRESSEN  
CSR No. 13367

Job No:



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BEFORE THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
REGIONAL CONNECTOR TRANSIT CORRIDOR PROJECT TEAM

Public Hearing in the Matter of:    )  
  )  
REGIONAL CONNECTOR TRANSIT        )  
CORRIDOR PROJECT                    )  
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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS taken at  
369 East First Street, Los Angeles,  
California, commencing at 6:30 p.m.,  
on Wednesday, April 1, 2009, heard before  
the REGIONAL CONNECTOR TRANSIT CORRIDOR  
PROJECT TEAM, reported by MELISSA TRESSEN,  
CSR No. 13367, a Certified Shorthand Reporter  
in and for the State of California.



1 APPEARANCES:

2 METRO PANEL CLARISSA FILGIOUN  
MEMBERS: DOLORES SALTARELLI

3  
4 FACILITATOR: GINNY CASE  
THE ROBERT GROUP

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	I N D E X	
1		
2	SPEAKERS:	PAGE
3	JOHN AGNEW	5
4	JOAN SPRINGHETTI	6
5	RUSSELL BROWN	7
6	DENNIS ALLEN	8
7	JAMES OKAZAKI	9
8		18
9	RYAN STERN	11
10	EDIE GLASS	12
11	DEBBIE KIM	13
12	BRYAN ALLEN	14
13	CHARLES ADELMAN	17
14	GERALD PASS	17
15	JOANNE KUMAMOTO	18
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1 Los Angeles, California, Wednesday, April 1, 2009

2 6:30 p.m.

3

4

5 MR. AGNEW: Hi. My name is John Agnew, no  
6 relation. Firstly, I'd like to say that I'm a huge fan  
7 of Transit and Light Rail. I'm originally from  
8 Australia, where we have a lot of light trains. So I'm a  
9 big fan of this, and I regularly ride both of these  
10 lines.

11 I go out to Arcadia to get my car serviced,  
12 and I've ridden my bike down to Long Beach a number of  
13 times, and I even caught the train back. So I'm  
14 familiar with both of the lines that you guys are  
15 proposing in connecting.

16 I'm very much in favor of the system being  
17 built out; however, with that being said, I'm very much  
18 in favor of the below-ground option. Mostly, I see,  
19 driving around town, the Blue Line and the traffic  
20 congestion that happens.

21 I think it's also going to be safer to be  
22 below ground, quieter, and also for aesthetic reasons,  
23 it would be nice if it was below ground.

24 Thank you.

25

MS. FILGIOUN: Thank you very much, Mr. Agnew.

1                   Joan Springhetti, Russell Brown.

2                   Sorry. We'll start you off at two minutes.

3                   MS. SPRINGHETTI: Good evening. My name is  
4 Joan Springhetti. I'm here representing the Higgins  
5 Building, which is at the intersection of 2nd and Main,  
6 which is on the route.

7                   The homeowners' association, like many of our  
8 neighborhood residents and business leaders, and stake  
9 holders, wants to reiterate in the strongest terms our  
10 support for the responsible building of the Regional  
11 Connector below-grade project and our categorical  
12 objection to opening it as an at-grade project.

13                   As you consider your proposal, we ask that you  
14 consider the many benefits of the below-grade project  
15 over the at-grade project. The below-grade option will  
16 allow for greater efficiency of the regional transit  
17 system. It will be safer. It will be less disruptive.  
18 It will encourage a pedestrian-friendly downtown.

19                   It will cost the city less in the long run,  
20 and it will improve the quality of life for existing and  
21 future downtown residents. 2nd Street is part of the  
22 functional historic and fine fabric of downtown.  
23 Converting it into a rail corridor would be devastating.

24                   While building this project below grade will

25 also create significant disruptions, we believe many of

1 those can be mitigated. If built responsibly, this  
2 project can be an asset for downtown residents, workers,  
3 and businesses as well as for cross-county travelers.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. FILGIOUN: Thank you.

6 Russell Brown, Dennis Allen, and James Okazaki.

7 MR. BROWN: Russell Brown. I'm president of the  
8 Downtown L.A. Neighborhood Council, also executive  
9 director to the Historic Downtown B.I.D., and chair of  
10 the district for our community for downtown.

11 All three groups have been very involved in  
12 this process and unanimously support the underground  
13 proposal and have very, very significant concerns about  
14 the above ground.

15 Any demonstration that happens all the time;  
16 filming, a single car blockage, a pedestrian, a dropped  
17 package, a stroller, any kind of traffic accident will  
18 literally paralyze the entire system in the county.

19 All you have to do is look at  
20 Washington Boulevard, and you can see what an unfriendly  
21 neighbor the rail down the middle of the street -- now,  
22 if this will be the entrance to the related project,  
23 Grand Avenue Park, and the Historic District, you'll  
24 literally be bisecting the neighborhood.

Also, if you look at what this will do in



1 splitting Purple Tokyo, that's not very pedestrian  
2 friendly. Also, we have significant concerns about the  
3 location of the station near Caltrans and Vibiana with  
4 the 150-year-old cathedral, and we suggest a linkage  
5 much closer to Broadway and Hill that would align the  
6 two lines of the proposed street car would also connect  
7 with the Red Line.

8           So you could have stations both in the north  
9 and south in order to connect up with the Red Line, and  
10 also, to offer significant transporting and development  
11 opportunity near the gateway that is at 2nd and  
12 Broadway.

13           Also, all you have to do is look at safety and  
14 security concerns at City Hall. To have transit on both  
15 sides of the City Hall, you can also block the entire  
16 system.

17           Thanks.

18           MS. FILGIOUN: Thank you, Mr. Brown.

19           Followed by James Okazaki and then  
20 Mizue Katayama.

21           MR. DENNIS ALLEN: Hi. My name is Dennis Allen.  
22 I'm with Los Angeles Streetcar, Inc. We are a nonprofit  
23 organization with the goal and intention of building a  
24 modern day streetcar system in downtown Los Angeles.

First of all, I'd like to give our absolute

1 support of the Regional Connector. We're obviously big  
2 fans of public transit, and I think the Regional  
3 Connector makes a lot of sense for connecting all of the  
4 transit projects in Los Angeles.

5           Secondly, we would like to express also our  
6 preference for the underground alternative for the  
7 Regional Connector. One of our goals as a regional  
8 circulator -- or an internal circulator in the downtown  
9 area, we've tied into transit as well as we possibly  
10 can.

11           I think that the underground alternative does  
12 that best, as well as puts the station a little closer  
13 to Broadway and Hill and some of the other proposed  
14 routes that we're looking at as well. So all those  
15 things in mind, I think we definitely prefer the  
16 underground alternative.

17           Thank you.

18           MS. FILGIOUN: Thank you very much, Mr. Allen.

19           Do we have any more speakers cards that I can  
20 add to my stack as we wait for Mr. Okazaki?

21           Thank you, Mr. Okazaki.

22           MR. OKAZAKI: James Okazaki. I'm representing the  
23 Nisei Week Foundation. I'm also a member of the  
24 community council. Myself, being a professional

25 transportation, having worked on every single rail type

1 projects, I support and our organization supports the  
2 subrail, not the at-grade and definitely not the T.S.M.  
3 existing system.

4 Obviously, for safety, schedule reliability,  
5 and performance, as well as disruption -- having less  
6 disruption and construction, I do want to stress some of  
7 the things that need to be done in work that the A.A.  
8 did not do, and that is both detail analysis of traffic.

9 Particularly, the capacity and operation on  
10 analysis on 1st and Alameda, where you're going to have  
11 an at-grade alignment across Alameda. The station  
12 location also is a little problematic for little Tokyo  
13 because east side Light Rail is not going to stop at  
14 Little Tokyo.

15 And I know you're calling the station between  
16 Main and L.A. Little Tokyo Station, I think Little Tokyo  
17 would be between L.A. and San Pedro. And T.O.D.'s  
18 possibly there, too, on the related project site.

19 I know you got to push to the West and you  
20 gotta push to the East. And maybe that's why you  
21 selected the site, right in the middle, opposite the --  
22 we would like -- the Little Tokyo community would like  
23 to have the station further east considered.

24 The last thing is the concern about

25 construction impact. Even if you do your tunnel work,

1 there's going to be some impact, and we want to make  
2 sure that doing the construction with the station as  
3 well at the tunnel operation, that you definitely work  
4 towards mitigating all the impacts.

5 Thank you.

6 MS. FILGIOUN: Thank you very much, Mr. Okazaki.

7 We have Mizue Katayama, Ryan Stern, and then  
8 Edie Glass.

9 Mr. Stern -- Ryan Stern, do you mind coming up  
10 next?

11 Edie Glass, and then Debbie Kim.

12 MR. STERN: Hi. I'm Ryan Stern, and I'm a neighbor  
13 here at Little Tokyo, and like everyone whose come  
14 forward here, I absolutely support -- I'm ecstatic about  
15 this project.

16 I was helping to convince people to vote yes  
17 on Measure R. I would show them a picture of the  
18 Regional Connector map. And sometimes they would  
19 confuse it for B.A.R.T. up in San Francisco. I say,  
20 "No, this isn't San Francisco. This is what L.A. could  
21 become."

22 To the people that are using doom and gloom to  
23 describe the above-ground covert, let's not go really  
24 crazy. I used to live in Culver City, and there were a

25 lot of people that were freaked out about the Expo, and



1 a lot of people are still freaked out about the Expo  
2 Line and describing the above ground as highly  
3 disruptive.

4           Guess what? We've got sirens; we've got busy  
5 streets. We live in downtown. Downtown is disruptive,  
6 but downtown is also very dense, and I think that the  
7 density of downtown, unlike Culver City, where I used to  
8 live, does make the underground option of a little bit  
9 more of a useful thing to explore surface rail down here  
10 to be frequently stopping and should give a lot of  
11 possibility to commercial businesses.

12           And I think that from the Regional Connector,  
13 we need to preserve the rapid transitness (sic) of the  
14 current Blue Line and Gold Line. So there's a balance  
15 that needs to be struck. I wouldn't say that we  
16 shouldn't get all bent out of shape about the above  
17 ground option.

18           It has to be explored, but I think that the  
19 preference, at least in my opinion, again, would be  
20 going for going below grade, and I think that's all I  
21 have.

22           Thank you.

23           MS. FILGIOUN: Thank you very much, Mr. Stern.

24           Edie Glass, Debbie Kim, and then Bryan Allen.

25

MS. GLASS: Hello. My name is Edie Glass. I've

1 been a rider of public transportation for many years. I  
2 would like to say that I'm very much in favor of this  
3 project; however, where it's necessary for an at-grade  
4 construction, I'd really like to see more green spaces.

5 I spend a lot of time waiting in the area  
6 where I'm taking public transportation, standing in the  
7 sun where there is absolutely no shelter. I think that  
8 if we're really concerned about the environment, we  
9 would create more green spaces around the areas where  
10 the buses stop so that we're not sitting, waiting in no  
11 shade, rather than making those spaces into parking lots  
12 where more congestion would exist. We should have an  
13 opportunity to sit and have more shade and green.

14 MS. FILGIOUN: Thank you very much, Ms. Glass.

15 Debbie Kim, followed by Bryan Allen.

16 Before Ms. Kim starts, do I have any more  
17 speakers cards that I can gather up?

18 Thank you, Ms. Kim. Go ahead.

19 MS. KIM: Good evening. I just wanted to share  
20 with you just the perspective from someone who lives at  
21 the Higgins Building. We're on the route on the  
22 2nd Street and Main Street, and I live on the second  
23 floor.

24 So that would be exactly -- if we were to go

25 with the at-grade, I would be looking right out my

1 window at the cables, I think, and the cars going by.  
2 And I think the hours were all week. I think -- I don't  
3 know -- past nine o'clock. I mean, it would be all  
4 night.

5           So basically, I live on the second floor.  
6 That's my house, my home, and I would be looking out my  
7 window, and this is what I would see. So obviously, the  
8 underground option would work for me, and, I think, for  
9 everyone that lives there. And that's just from my  
10 perspective of course.

11           But as Joan pointed out, that's our little  
12 neighborhood. I have a dog. We walk our dogs right  
13 there. I see neighborhood families with their children,  
14 and we know those accidents that happen up in those  
15 areas where the metros have accidents easily.

16           And I can't imagine having something like that  
17 right at 2nd and Main. That would be a disaster. So  
18 underground is definitely the way to go.

19           Thank you.

20           MS. FILGIOUN: Thank you, Ms. Kim.

21           Mr. Allen.

22           MR. BRYAN ALLEN: My name is Bryan H. Allen.  
23 Obviously, I'm a bicyclist. And I have a 31-year  
24 history of observing the institutional investigations in

25 this county since 1978.

1           First, I must protest -- legal -- I must lodge  
2 a legal protest against the two-minute limit described  
3 here. The C.E.Q.A. document and the N.P.A. document  
4 will be comprised of tens of thousands of words. To  
5 limit people's testimony on that scope to two minutes is  
6 legally not reasonable, especially considering the small  
7 number of speakers here tonight. I expect having to  
8 engage attorneys to represent me on this point, and I  
9 solidify here.

10           Ladies and gentlemen, the formal purpose of  
11 this meeting is to refine the scope of the C.E.Q.A.  
12 document, the Environmental Impact Report, and the  
13 N.E.P. document, the Environmental Impact Statement.

14           How many of you here have actually bothered to  
15 read the guidelines of -- or speculate under the  
16 California Code of Regulations that actually bothered to  
17 read the guidelines for the preparation of the E.I.S.  
18 and the Code of Regulations?

19           I have.

20           Let me see the hands of those of you who have  
21 also reviewed these documents.

22           Uh-huh, as I expected.

23           Ladies and gentlemen, especially the C.E.Q.A.  
24 document -- the state document -- the scope of it is

25 limited to considering only the potential adverse



1 impacts upon the physical environment. It is not even  
2 permitted to consider the social impact or social  
3 benefits of a project except in considering the  
4 significance or insignificance of a proposed impact or  
5 predicted impact upon the physical environment.

6 Ladies and gentlemen, most of the comments,  
7 excuse me, here today, unfortunately, are legally not  
8 relevant. I have seen many reports in the past. I've  
9 participated in many. Most of your comments will say  
10 something like "comment noted" and do nothing more than  
11 that. Because unfortunately, they have not bothered to  
12 inform you of your duty under law to testify and  
13 moreover --

14 MS. FILGIOUN: Mr. Allen, your time is up.

15 MR. BRYAN ALLEN: They refuse to --

16 MS. FILGIOUN: Mr. Allen, I'm asking you --

17 MR. BRYAN ALLEN: I shall conclude by saying that I  
18 request --

19 MS. FILGIOUN: -- to keep your comments under two  
20 minutes like everyone else --

21 MR. BRYAN ALLEN: I request that all non-C.E.Q.A.,  
22 non-N.E.P.A. documents be addressed by the F.T.A. and  
23 the L.A.C.M.T.A. in an appendix --

24 MS. FILGIOUN: Your comments are being recorded.

25 Thank you very much, Mr. Allen.