

1 Mr. Charles A. Adelman. Thank you, sir.

2 MR. ADELMAN: Hi. My name is Charles Adelman, and
3 I've ridden transit all over the world, basically. And
4 my first comment is: Picture a train coming down
5 2nd Street every two-and-a-half minutes in each
6 direction. It's already a busy street. That doesn't
7 work. Major traffic tie up and major traffic
8 congestion. It needs to go underground.

9 Second problem, the proposed junction, Alameda
10 and 2nd. A single-level junction, as it is being
11 proposed here, is either going to bring separate streets
12 by elevating the street over it or running the street
13 under it, still cannot accommodate a train every
14 two-and-a-half minutes in each direction.

15 It really needs to be split-level junction
16 underground. And it needs to be predesigned so that
17 that station can preserve all trains.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. FILGIOUN: Thank you, Mr. Adelman.

20 We are here through eight o'clock. So we will
21 continue to take comments up until then. So, again, we
22 ask that you limit your comments to two minutes, should
23 you like to speak.

24 Please state your name.

25

MR. PASS: Gerald Pass. Just real quickly, I did

1 write the -- and I never got the chance to actually say
2 it.

3 I just really believe that the east-west
4 alignment, the actual names of the routes should be
5 reflective of single directions one way, which is to say
6 that the east L.A. extension, the Gold Line, I think,
7 should remain Gold; whereas, the Expo Line can take
8 on -- remain Gold.

9 MS. FILGIOUN: Thank you, sir.

10 It's now about 7:30, and we will continue to
11 take your comments, as I mentioned earlier, until 8:00.

12 We have JoAnne Kumamoto. Thank you, JoAnne.

13 MS. KUMAMOTO: Thank you. My name is JoAnne
14 Kumamoto, and I'm with the Little Tokyo Community
15 Advisory Council. I was going to give my time to James.
16 I think we both agree on this discussion, but James has
17 the notes.

18 MR. OKAZAKI: Thank you, JoAnne.

19 MS. FILGIOUN: Keep it to two minutes, please.

20 MR. OKAZAKI: I would like to put on the record
21 that JoAnne and I have been talking for a while, and
22 we've been analyzing the station spacing, and we thought
23 the east-west alignment along 2nd Street kind of got
24 gypped in choice of number of stations.

1 between L.A. Station and San Pedro, and I think the
2 Little Tokyo community wants to support the -- all the
3 activities that have been proposed to Broadway, including
4 the trolley rail.

5 So I think they should give a station near
6 Broadway, but Little Tokyo would still like to get a
7 station. We think there should be two stations along
8 the east-west alignment between the Music Hall and the
9 1st and Alameda Stations.

10 So looking at the spacing of the stations, we
11 think that makes more equal distance for walking to
12 these stations. So we're recommending that the
13 environmental impact analysis -- that you take a look at
14 an additional station on 2nd Street.

15 Thank you very much.

16 MS. FILGIOUN: Thank you, Ms. Kumamoto.

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

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BEFORE THE METRO

REGIONAL CONNECTOR TRANSIT CORRIDOR PROJECT TEAM

Public Scoping Meeting in the)
Matter of:)
)
REGIONAL CONNECTOR TRANSIT CORRIDOR)
PROJECT DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT)
STATEMENT/DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL)
IMPACT REPORT)
_____)

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Los Angeles, California

Thursday, April 2, 2009

Reported by:
MARCENA M. MUNGUIA,
CSR No. 10420
Job No.:

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS, taken at the
L.A. Central Library, 630 West Fifth Street,
Los Angeles, California, commencing at 12:00 p.m.,
on Monday, April 2, 2009, heard before the
METRO REGIONAL CONNECTOR TRANSIT CORRIDOR PROJECT TEAM,
reported by MARCENA M. MUNGUIA, CSR No. 10420,
a Certified Shorthand Reporter in and for the
State of California.

24

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1 APPEARANCES:

2 Metro Presenter: DOLORES ROYBAL SALTARELLI
3 Transportation Planning Manager,
4 Metro

5 Facilitator: ANN KERMAN
6 Community Relations Manager,
7 Metro

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1 Los Angeles, California, Monday, April 2, 2009

2 12:00 p.m.

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5 MS. KERMAN: Thank you, Dolores. We're going to get
6 set up here with our second mike and what I'd like to
7 invite all of you to do is if you wish to make comments
8 today, to fill out a speaker card.

9 Can you hear me? Good.

10 Fill out a speaker card. I will be calling up
11 three names at a time and what you will then do is you'll
12 have the two minutes to speak. We will be capturing all
13 of that by our court reporter and we will be here until
14 1:30 taking comments. So even if you're done speaking,
15 we'll still be here, just in case you want to come up and
16 make a comment.

17 As you come up, you'll be speaking from the
18 microphone to your right. I ask that you state your name
19 clearly for the public record.

20 And we again welcome all of your comments.

21 First up, Craig F. Thompson, followed by
22 Kymberleigh Richards, followed by Arnold Sachs.

23 MR. THOMPSON: I'm Craig Thompson, founding member of
24 the Citizens for Better Mobility. And we believe that

25 although the Downtown connector is a very good idea,

1 these two alternatives look quite expensive (indicating)
2 when a cheaper alternative and one that functions just as
3 well exists. It is quite possible to take this line
4 straight down Alameda Street to Washington to make the
5 west turn on Washington to hook up with the preexisting
6 Blue Line.

7 Furthermore, there could be also a junction
8 installed at Flower and Washington to make the connection
9 to the Expo line.

10 Why do we have to spend so many millions of
11 dollars on tunneling when it could be saved just by
12 dropping in two stations, one at Seventh and Alameda and
13 the other one at Olympic, and you've got your low-cost
14 connector and it achieves all of the purposes of the
15 connector without the high cost of tunneling.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. KERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

18 KyMBERLEIGH Richards, followed by Arnold Sachs,
19 followed by Scott Sookman.

20 MS. RICHARDS: Thank you, Ann. I'm going to face the
21 counter.

22 KyMBERLEIGH Richards, Public and Legislative
23 Affairs Director, Southern California Transit Advocates.
24 We support the underground option. Given the traffic

25 issues in Downtown Los Angeles, we believe even having

1 part of it at grade would create operational problems and
2 would actually worsen the mobility for those that
3 continue to drive in the Downtown region.

4 In direct response to the previous commenter,
5 knowing what I know about Alameda Street, I don't believe
6 that's a viable option because these two options create
7 station location within the heart of Downtown, which is
8 where the people are that need the service. Alameda is
9 at the eastern edge of the Downtown area and, quite
10 honestly, there would be much more of an
11 interconnectivity issue there. To operate along Alameda
12 would require additional feeder bus service, which does
13 not now exist, in order to get from those stations into
14 the heart of Downtown.

15 For that reason, I am inclined to reject the
16 previous commenter's suggestion. And, again, we are in
17 support of the underground option which is contained
18 within the presentation.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. KERMAN: Thank you, Kymberleigh.

21 Next up, Arnold Sachs, followed by
22 Scott Sookman, followed by Nate Zablen.

23 MR. SACHS: Good afternoon. Arnold Sachs, a transit
24 rider. Your example of three transfers for a trip from

25 Pasadena to Staples Center, maybe you can explain to the

1 public why the 1.6-mile gap exists. When the Blue Line
2 was first considered in your original scoping meeting in
3 October, they mentioned that the original -- that one of
4 the possibilities was the original Blue Line plan, which
5 meant that the original Blue Line would have gone from
6 Pasadena to Union Station. Why the 1.6-mile gap exists,
7 if they would have studied that -- the Blue Line opened
8 up in 1990 -- they would have had planning to go from
9 Seventh and Metro to Union Station.

10 The new part of this project is an at-grade
11 crossing. Why somebody would consider putting the train
12 in front of City Hall, beyond me. Have you tried to get
13 into City Hall lately with the security measures? You're
14 not going to have a train there.

15 Everything old is new again. This is just
16 reselling old stuff. I'd like to point out that this
17 (indicating) is a flyer you get from Metro. Down in the
18 corner, here is an articulated bus that they discontinued
19 in 1983 (indicating).

20 They spent a billion dollars fighting a Consent
21 Decree to put more seats on buses. Then in the years --
22 in early 2000, they came out with new articulated buses.
23 I can't imagine Metro's going to spend 10 million dollars
24 on tunneling equipment to build tunnels from Seventh and

25 Metro to Union Station and not be able to use that

1 equipment again.

2 And just remember, by not building this part of
3 the tunnel in the beginning, it changed the whole
4 infrastructure for the Metro plan and for the Red Line
5 also.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. KERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Sachs.

8 Next up, Scott Sookman, followed by Nate Zablen,
9 followed by B.H. Allen.

10 MR. SOOKMAN: Hello. My name is Scott Sookman. I
11 live Downtown.

12 As far as the last commenter goes, I think we
13 probably would be here until the sun went down if we went

14 into all the reasons why the Blue Line was not connected
15 and constructed to Pasadena in 1990, but there probably
16 were three reasons at the time, and those were politics,
17 politics, and politics. I just have a couple of points.

18 Looking at this system and what it does, I think
19 it's a very good value for the money. If you look at
20 most Metro systems around the world, what a lot of them
21 or most of them do is they have services sharing the same
22 tracks, and that's what this would allow the Metro system
23 to do; provide trains going to different destinations,

24 sharing the same tracks, and that adds a lot of utility
25 to the system as a whole. It allows people different

1 choices in destinations and where they're going. And
2 now, since we're going to have a line going to the east,
3 we're going to have the Expo Line going out to the west,
4 we've got almost every point of the compass covered once
5 those open, so in order to connect all those points of
6 the compass, this is a very good project.

7 It has to be underground. Quality doesn't cost.
8 It pays, since we have the Measure R funds available,
9 since we have hopefully some Stimulus Funds from the
10 Federal government available also.

11 Let's invest in a grade-separated route, the
12 Regional Connector underground, and let's add a lot of
13 utility to the Metro Rail System and let's make it a
14 world-class rail system.

15 Thank you.

16 MS. KERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Sookman.

17 Next up, Nate Zablen, followed by B. H. Allen,
18 followed by Tracey Chavira.

19 MR. ZABLEN: I'm Nate Zablen, and I'd like to suggest
20 the underground alternative to me would be the best. It
21 would avoid a lot of the traffic and possible delays you
22 get with the demonstrations and pedestrian traffic, so I
23 think the underground alternative is preferable.

24 On the other hand, though, I do think there

25 should be a station closer to the Civic Center; in other

1 words, City Hall, the Federal Building, the Federal
2 Courthouse. You have a lot of potential riders there and
3 there's a lot of traffic.

4 I think the present station on Second Street is
5 a little far from the center and I think to attract a lot
6 of riders and make it work, we need people commuting.
7 They should have it right near the City Hall area and the
8 Federal building.

9 Also, I think it should be possible for a
10 transit rider to take the train from Pasadena and go all
11 the way to Santa Monica. I think there should be through
12 trains not only from Pasadena to Long Beach, but from
13 Pasadena to the Westside. I think that would encourage a
14 lot of riders and make it easier; and, also, to
15 University of Southern California, an important employer
16 in this area, which a lot of people work for.

17 So I think these are alternatives to be
18 considered and, also, it's important to get that station
19 as close as possible to the Disney Hall and the Music
20 Center so you can just get out of that station and just
21 walk up to it.

22 This is a little bit further, but I think -- I
23 favor the underground alternative, but I think there
24 should be some moderations to encourage a greater

25 ridership and make it more convenient for people from

1 other parts of the region to get through and go take the
2 train all the way to their destination, not having to
3 transfer.

4 Thank you very much.

5 MS. KERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Zablen.

6 Next up, B. H. Allen, followed by Tracey
7 Chavira, and I'd like to invite anyone else that would
8 like to speak to fill out a card. You can raise your
9 hand.

10 Mr. Allen?

11 MR. ALLEN: For the court reporter, my name is
12 spelled B-r-y-a-n A double l-e-n.

13 Obviously, the helmet advertises that I am a
14 nonmotorist bicyclist. I have painful experience through
15 nearly 31 years, since I was a young adult in 1978,
16 observing the institutional and bureaucratic failures in
17 transit in L.A. and Orange Counties.

18 The LACTC first studied the Downtown connector
19 in the Pasadena Line at UNO Initiative in 1986, not 1990,
20 ma'am, and in the Long Beach Line from 1982 to 1985.

21 MTA failed to tell you, ladies and gentlemen,
22 today's purpose is not to ask you your opinions on what
23 should be built, but to seek --

24 MS. CASE: Mr. Allen, I've stopped the timer. I've

25 stopped the timer. You need to move your mouth away from

1 the speaker so the reporter and the public can hear your
2 comments.

3 MR. ALLEN: -- but to seek your opinions on what
4 should be included in this scope or range of information
5 of the future environmental document. The State's CEQA
6 and Federal NEPA prescribe what must be included. I have
7 personally reviewed key parts of the regulations in Title
8 14, California Code of Regulations, and Title 40,
9 California Code of Regulations. By a show of hands,
10 raise your hands, how many of you also have read those
11 regulations? I thought so.

12 CEQA prohibits even considering social impacts
13 for most purposes; only the significant adverse effects
14 upon the physical environment. Did you know that if you
15 fail to address that, MTA will ignore you or respond with
16 "comments noted," end quote? I bear personal eyewitness
17 to that fact.

18 Courts have repeatedly held that environmental
19 comments are evidence which the decision makers must
20 consider in addition to other evidence in deciding what
21 they want to do and the project characteristics. Here,
22 the jury analog is the MTA Board and the Federal Transit
23 Administrator. This phase is analogous to the litigant's
24 pretrial haggling over what evidence the jury should read

25 and no more than that.

1 Those of you who say -- again, available
2 alternative A and -- go ahead -- alternative B are like
3 those who say link alternative A and free alternative B.
4 It's premature. B is mature and ideal with the evidence
5 required.

6 MS. KERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Allen.

7 Tracey Chavira. And, Tracey, before you start,
8 do I have any more cards? You're all welcome to fill out
9 a card. We're happy to take your comments.

10 MS. CHAVIRA: Good afternoon. Tracey Chavira,
11 Central City Association. Let me begin by acknowledging
12 Metro staff for keeping the process moving along so
13 steadily. Metro staff and consultants have been
14 extremely responsive to CCA's membership and generous
15 with your time, so thank you so much for that.

16 After participating in the analysis process and
17 analyzing all 33 or so built options, CCA supports the
18 underground option, which for a relatively small
19 difference in cost will generate great benefits.

20 While recognizing the need to study all four
21 options, I would like to take this opportunity to explain
22 why we favor the below-grade option.

23 First, it will be impervious to above-ground
24 incidents, making it the most reliable option for

25 commuters. Second, it's expected to garner the most

1 transit riders. Third, it won't create street-level
2 visual clutter, which might interfere with revitalization
3 of parts of Downtown. Finally, the regional sector will
4 be competing for Federal funding for its completion.

5 The underground alternative has the best
6 transportation system user benefit score, making it the
7 best prospect for obtaining medical funding.

8 We urge you to move this project forward quickly
9 and not go beyond the 45-day public comment time period,
10 since speedy approval will save the County money and get
11 people moving sooner.

12 Thank you for the opportunity to make these
13 comments.

14 MS. KERMAN: Thank you, Tracey.

15 Do I have anyone else wishing to speak? If so,
16 if you could raise your hand, we'll get you a card.

17 It is now -- thank you. Xavier Grobet?

18 MR. GROBET: Please. Hi. Name is Xavier Grobet.

19 I'm a resident here in Downtown and I think the
20 underground proposition is the most interesting. I think
21 it's -- if something -- if an investment like this is
22 going to be done, it should be something that is going to
23 last for a long, long time, and that's what's going to
24 give us the most benefit. But in the meantime, before

25 that happens, maybe a no-build possibility should be

1 addressed while this is all done. I mean, there could be
2 a shuttle service or something that starts doing that
3 service from now on until the other option is finished.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. KERMAN: Thank you very much.

6 Roger Christensen?

7 MR. CHRISTENSEN: My name is Roger Christensen. I am
8 the chairman of Metro Citizen Advisory Council. We have
9 not yet weighed in on the mode for Regional Connector.
10 We are a great fan of the project and I would -- we're
11 busy -- today we're excited about what's going to happen
12 with Exposition, of course. That decision is today.

13 You know, all it takes is one fender bender, one
14 vehicle making a wrong left turn in this project, and the
15 entire light-rail system is shut down from Pasadena to
16 Santa Monica, to the eastside, to, you know, whatever.

17 When you're dealing with two-minute or
18 2.5-minute headways, you really have to have grade
19 separation, not only for the safety of the passengers,
20 but just for the efficiency of the system, and this is
21 the missing link. This is the four-level interchange
22 that the light-rail system has always needed for
23 Downtown. It's not a Downtown project. It's a great

24 benefit to the entire region.

25 Thank you.

1 MS. KERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Christensen.

2 Christian Allen.

3 MR. ALLEN: Yeah. Good afternoon, everybody. My
4 name is Christian Allen and I just want to keep it kind
5 of short, but I'm not actually -- I actually do kind of
6 support the underground project because, honestly, it's a
7 lot more efficient. And personally, as a Laker fan,
8 trust me, say they win the championship. Do you really
9 want to see Kobe Bryant on a parade bus getting hit by
10 the 12:25 train to Long Beach? That's all I've got to
11 say.

12 MS. KERMAN: Thank you very much.

13 It's now almost 1:00 o'clock. We are going to
14 be here until 1:30 taking comments, so if you decide in
15 the next half-hour you'd like to speak, we'd be delighted
16 to hear you.

17 There are further ways that you can continue
18 during the next period of days through May 11th to
19 provide us with your comments. There is a comment form
20 that I believe is at the registration desk -- you may
21 have received it -- which you can either fill out today
22 or you may e-mail, fax, or mail it to us. You may go on
23 our website, www.metro.net/regionalconnector and visit
24 the website and make comments that way. You may also

25 e-mail us at regionalconnector@metro.net.

1 We will be engaging the community throughout
2 this environmental process and I encourage you to visit
3 the website and stay posted that way. Please make sure
4 that we have your most current information on file so
5 that we can keep you posted by e-mail, by mail, what have
6 you.

7 And with that, I thank you all for coming.
8 You're welcome to be with us the next half-hour and,
9 again, thank you for taking time during your busy
10 schedule to find out what we're doing here today.

11 Thank you.

12 (Recess)

13 MS. KERMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, I understand we
14 have one more comment. Maria de Lourdes Gonzales?

15 MS. GONZALES: Good afternoon, everybody.

16 About two or three days ago, I found the
17 pamphlet. I use MTA on a regular basis and when I found
18 out that there was going to be a presentation here today,
19 I came here today because I was in the building and I
20 came to express my concerns and my questions in regards
21 to some of the frustrations that we have as users on the
22 MTA, and I'm very happy that I have the opportunity to
23 comment and speak on some of these points.

24 I've sent a letter through the Internet and they

25 sent me a really nice response, but the point is not to

1 get just a response, but that they do take into
2 consideration all of the issues that we have as users.

3 When I sent my letter, I wrote down four points,
4 but I'm only going to talk about three of them. One of
5 them is that it's very difficult to understand why we
6 have to wait so long for the bus, and sometimes one to up
7 to four buses have passed in the same route. I wish I
8 had a camera on me then so that I could take a picture
9 and show what I mean. That's one of my points.

10 Another is that there be better coordination
11 between the buses between one stop and another stop.

12 Another point is that when we have the rapid
13 bus, to have better coordination on the stops that are
14 not rapid buses. Some are on one side of the street and
15 others are on the other side or opposite sides of the
16 street.

17 During the daytime, it's easier -- during the
18 daytime, it's easier to be able to see a bus from far
19 away. And I don't have great eyesight so I have to be on
20 the lookout; but in the evening, it's a lot more
21 difficult when I have to look far away and I have to run
22 after a bus. It's a lot more dangerous in the evening,
23 or to just have to stand there and wait for the next bus
24 to come, and service isn't as frequent in the evening.