

## Chapter 7 PUBLIC AND AGENCY OUTREACH

The chapter and the Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Appendix (Appendix I) fully document the implementation of the Public Participation Plan for the Alternatives Analysis (AA) and Draft EIS/EIR phases of the project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Outreach efforts during the AA and Draft EIS/EIR process were performed in accordance with the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), and were inclusive and encouraging of community participation. Metro sought extensive coordination with other federal, state, local, and tribal entities during the scoping process and throughout the Draft EIS/EIR phase of the project. This chapter provides summary highlights of the outreach efforts and specifically addresses the public participation process and activities from early scoping (October 31 to November 30, 2007) during the AA process through the formal scoping period (March 24 to May 11, 2009), and during subsequent preparation of the Draft EIS/EIR and this Final EIS/EIR from 2009 through 2011.

While this chapter documents outreach activities undertaken before and during preparation of this Final EIS/EIR, Metro intends for intensive outreach to be ongoing throughout project design and construction.

This chapter has been updated since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR to address comments received on the Draft EIS/EIR, as indicated in the Responses to Comments, Volumes F-2 and F-3, of this Final EIS/EIR, and to reflect additional public outreach activities that have taken place in the intervening time between publication of the Draft EIS/EIR and the preparation of this Final EIS/EIR. A vertical line in the margin is used to show where revisions have occurred to this chapter since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR, excluding minor edits for consistency and correction of formatting and minor typographical errors. There have been no major changes to the material in this chapter that originally appeared in the Draft EIS/EIR.

### 7.1 Summary Highlights of Outreach Efforts

Downtown Los Angeles has undergone a dramatic transformation over the last decade from a predominantly daytime employment center to a dynamic 24-hour community with a burgeoning residential population, new commercial and residential construction, and significant investment in entertainment and cultural venues. The downtown residential community runs the gamut from urban professionals, to a thriving arts community, and a largely elderly and immigrant population. Downtown Los Angeles is characterized by distinct neighborhoods each with their own unique character, priorities and concerns; including Little Tokyo, the Arts District, Historic Core, Bunker Hill, and the Financial District.

The Regional Connector project garnered considerable stakeholder interest during both of the previous study phases. Recognizing the unique challenges and opportunities of the proposed project, as well as its potential benefits beyond the immediate downtown Los Angeles area, Metro developed a creative approach to ensuring an inclusive, engaging and transparent outreach process. The community outreach effort was designed to build awareness and understanding of the project, provide opportunities for ongoing stakeholder involvement, and assist in the identification of potential mitigation measures.

Over the course of the study, outreach included the engagement of a wide diversity of stakeholders and opinion leaders including business organizations, chambers of commerce, business improvement districts (BIDs), neighborhood councils, community councils, arts organizations, and residents groups in downtown Los Angeles. With the promise of seamless light rail transit (LRT) lines spanning 50 miles from north to south and 25 miles from east to west, new population centers would enjoy regional connectivity. Regional commuters in Long Beach, the second largest city in Los Angeles County, and in the San Gabriel Valley, which claims over 20 percent of the County's population, are poised to receive significant benefit because of the Regional Connector.

In November 2008, voters approved Measure R, a one-half-cent sales tax in Los Angeles County that would create a partial source of funding for transportation projects. The promise of Measure R funding galvanized transit supporters throughout the County, including supporters of the Regional Connector. Stakeholders in the downtown Los Angeles area such as the Central City Association, the Downtown Center Business Improvement District, and the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council spoke publicly in favor of the project. At the same time, the project's perceived enhanced viability also instilled a more immediate sense of urgency among some downtown stakeholders who had not yet taken a position of either support or opposition to the project, most notably the historic community of Little Tokyo located at the eastern end of the alignment.

One of the communities in the project area, Little Tokyo, is one of only three remaining "Japantowns" in the United States. Over the years, Little Tokyo has experienced the loss of some significant portions of its community to the construction of several city, state, and federal buildings via eminent domain. Many community members saw the Regional Connector as one more attempt to encroach into Little Tokyo, further reducing its size and negatively impacting the community's cultural identity and economic viability. This unease peaked when the Little Tokyo community coalesced against both of the build alternatives initially proposed for study in the Draft EIS/EIR, the At-Grade Emphasis LRT and Underground Emphasis LRT Alternatives, at several Metro Board and community meetings in the summer and fall of 2009. The opposition was based on the impacts both of these alternatives could have on the community during and after construction.

At the same time, Metro recognized that the potential impacts of the Regional Connector on this important historical, cultural and ethnic community would raise environmental justice concerns and proactively engaged the Little Tokyo community in a focused and collaborative dialogue to address their concerns. This outreach culminated in the formation of the Little Tokyo Working Group (LTWG), comprised of Metro staff and leaders of the Little Tokyo Community Council (LTCC), which represents over 100 business and community organizations.

The LTWG worked collaboratively to develop an alternative acceptable to the community and discussed possible mitigation measures that could address the construction and operational impacts of the Regional Connector. The formation of the LTWG proved to be transformative for the project and served as a catalyst for dialogue and growing confidence between Metro and the community. This was solidified as Metro, at the LTWG's request, provided funding to hire a

consultant to assist the community in acquiring an in-depth understanding of the environmental process and developing potential mitigation measures for documentation in the Draft EIS/EIR.

The ongoing work with the LTWG led to the development of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative, an alternative that not only was acceptable to Little Tokyo stakeholders, but also generated widespread enthusiasm and support for the Regional Connector. In October 2009, the LTCC approved a motion from the LTWG to ask Metro to study the Fully Underground LRT Alternative and consider adding the alternative to the Draft EIS/EIR. While there were continued concerns about potential construction impacts to the Little Tokyo community, the group was optimistic that the new build alternative would better fit the community's needs while achieving the project's purpose and need and regional goals. At its February 2010 meeting, the Metro Board of Directors approved the addition of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative to the Draft EIS/EIR for a full environmental evaluation. Significant numbers of Little Tokyo community members attended the Board meeting to show their support for the new alternative and to commend Metro for addressing their concerns. Following the conclusion of the Draft EIS/EIR public review period, the Metro Board of Directors designated the Fully Underground LRT Alternative as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) at the October 28, 2010 meeting. The Board voted to delete the Flower/5<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Street station from the LPA while not precluding its implementation as a separate future project. The LPA has since been refined to reduce project impacts in coordination with the Little Tokyo community and other stakeholders in the project area.

The outcomes of the LTWG were supported by other key constituencies in downtown Los Angeles including the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council, the Central City Association, the Higgins Building Homeowners Association, and Bringing Back Broadway. The formation of the LTWG, accompanied by Metro's desire to implement a transparent and proactive process in engaging this community, collectively provided an extraordinary opportunity for stakeholder engagement to defuse potentially volatile environmental justice issues, and in the process build trust, widespread enthusiasm, and support for a critical transit project.

## 7.2 Background

The Regional Connector project would provide a connection between 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station and Union Station, linking the LRT Metro Gold, Blue, and future Expo Lines through downtown Los Angeles. The Regional Connector would allow a seamless "one-seat ride" through downtown, north-south between Montclair and Long Beach, and east-west between East Los Angeles and Santa Monica. This two-mile gap closure in the region's light rail system would provide continuous through-service spanning 50 miles north to south, and 25 miles east to west, improving access to both local and regional destinations and creating a well-connected transportation network for Los Angeles County.

In 2007, Metro initiated the AA study, which identified and analyzed 36 alignments for the Regional Connector. After technical analysis and extensive community input, the study yielded two "build" alternatives that utilized LRT technology as well as the two required alternatives for comparison, the No Build and Transportation System Management (TSM). In early 2009, the Metro Board of Directors authorized further study of these four alternatives and preparation of a Draft EIS/EIR. During the preparation of the Draft EIS/EIR, Metro's Board of Directors added a

fifth alternative in response to community input. The following alternatives were analyzed in the Draft EIS/EIR:

- No Build Alternative
- TSM Alternative
- At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative
- Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative
- Fully Underground LRT Alternative

The Metro Board of directors subsequently designated the Fully Underground LRT Alternative as the LPA on October 28, 2010.

### 7.3 Program Elements

The public outreach effort for the Regional Connector was designed to provide information and raise awareness about the study, engage stakeholders at important milestones, and develop feedback mechanisms. Elements of this outreach program included though were not limited to:

- Public meetings, including formal public and agency scoping meetings, public hearings, and a series of community update meetings held at key study milestones.
- Targeted stakeholder meetings that focused on specialized issues and localized concerns, including the following:
  - LTWG addressed concerns related to construction and operational impacts in Little Tokyo. Work with this group led Metro to reconsider a fully grade-separated alternative which, in turn, generated considerable community support for this alternative and an appreciation of Metro's responsiveness.
  - Urban Design Working Group (UDWG) addressed overall urban design issues as well as focused station location and entrance discussions for the Financial District, Bunker Hill, Little Tokyo, and Historic Core.
  - Residential groups such as the Savoy and Higgins Building Homeowners Associations addressed potential impacts to their properties.
  - Large property owners in the Financial District and on Grand Avenue discussed potential impacts during construction.
- Multi-lingual outreach to Japanese, Korean, and Spanish-speaking stakeholders including translation at community updates and formal scoping meetings, as well as most collateral materials.

- Multi-tiered meeting notifications including direct mail, internet based distribution via email, print and broadcast media, newspaper advertisements, and on-board Metro buses and trains.
- Employment of “new” media such as blogs, social networks and other internet or web-based tools (including a live web-broadcast of an April 2010 Community Update Meeting) to provide regional notification and involve traditionally hard to reach audiences (such as youth and commuters) in the decision-making process.

The Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Appendix (Appendix I) provides full details of all the public outreach conducted during the AA and Draft EIS/EIR phases of the Regional Connector study.

## 7.4 Public Participation Plan (PPP)

In order to ensure that the public was informed and had opportunities to comment at key milestones throughout the study, a detailed PPP was developed at the commencement of both the AA and Draft EIS/EIR. The Plan included a detailed stakeholder database, communications protocols, public input tracking, a proposed schedule for interfacing with the public, and recommendations for how meetings should be conducted at various stages of the study. Additional recommendations for individual stakeholder interviews or briefings, inter-agency coordination and the formation of working groups were also described in the Plan. The full PPP is provided in the Final Scoping Report (Appendix G).

### 7.4.1. Public Outreach Tools and Mechanisms

#### 7.4.1.1 Stakeholder Identification and Project Database

A primary objective of the PPP for the Regional Connector is to identify, contact, inform, and gather public comment from Regional Connector stakeholders and the public about plans to improve transit by linking several LRT systems through downtown Los Angeles. The Regional Connector's stakeholders are not limited to those living and working in the project area. Stakeholders would include people from all over Los Angeles County who will ultimately benefit from improved regional mobility and linkages that connect one end of the county to another, including those using the Metro Blue, Gold and Expo LRT Lines, and their future extensions.

Stakeholders for this study include, but are not limited to: local, county, federal, and state elected and appointed officials; public agencies/officials; neighborhood councils, homeowners associations, and community councils; business, employer, and labor associations and groups; employment centers, retail and entertainment centers, and other key venues; education, cultural, religious, and health care institutions in or accessible to the project area; transit advocacy and environmental groups; and interested individuals.

An initial stakeholder list was developed and maintained during the AA phase. The stakeholder list was updated on a regular basis, following public meetings and as Metro received phone, email, and written comments. The current stakeholder database for the Regional Connector Transit Corridor project includes over 3,600 individuals, businesses, and organizations. An abridged list of key stakeholder groups and organizations that have been contacted during the

Regional Connector study is provided below. The full stakeholder database is listed in the Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Appendix (Appendix I Part 1).

A comprehensive stakeholder database was used extensively for targeted email and direct mail. However, a radius mailer was utilized for the distribution of the Notice of Availability (NOA) and to publicize information about the public hearings. The radius mailer targeted the project area and included approximately 13,126 addresses in downtown’s 90012 zip code (predominately Little Tokyo).

### 7.4.1.2 Collateral Materials

Various informational documents including project fact sheets, frequently asked questions (FAQs), meeting notices, electronic newsletters/e-bulletins, and other collateral materials provided the public with project information during the AA and Draft EIS/EIR phases. Table 7-1 lists the key stakeholder groups and organizations.

**Table 7-1. List of Key Stakeholder Groups and Organizations**

Key Stakeholder Groups and Organizations	
Federal and State	
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	State of California, Office of the Governor
Federal Aviation Administration	State of California State Assembly Members
Federal Bureau of Investigation	State of California State Senators
Federal Emergency Management Agency	State of California Air Resources Board
Federal Highway Administration	State of California Board of Mining and Geology
Federal Railroad Administration	State of California Coastal Commission
Federal Transit Administration	State of California Department of Fish and Game
National Marine Fisheries Service	State of California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
National Parks Service	State of California Department of Health and Human Services
United States Army Corps of Engineers	State of California Department of Housing and Community Development
United States Army Reserve	State of California Department of Parks and Recreation

Table 7-1. List of Key Stakeholder Groups and Organizations (continued)

Key Stakeholder Groups and Organizations	
Federal and State	
Federal Emergency Management Agency	State of California Department of Public Resources
Federal Highway Administration	State of California Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration	State of California Department of Toxic Substances Control
Federal Transit Administration	State of California Energy Commission
National Marine Fisheries Service	State of California Environmental Protection Agency
National Parks Service	State of California Office of Historic Preservation
United States Army Corps of Engineers	State of California Public Utilities Commission
United States Army Reserve	
United States Department of Defense	
United States Department of Homeland Security	
United States Department of the Interior	
United States Department of Veterans Affairs	
United States Fish and Wildlife Service	
United States General Services Administration	
United States House of Representatives	
United States Senators	
Native American Groups	
Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council	Ti'At Society
Gabrielino Tongva Nation	Tongva Ancestral Territorial Tribal Nation
Gabrielino/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission	

**Table 7-1. List of Key Stakeholder Groups and Organizations (continued)**

Key Stakeholder Groups and Organizations	
<b>Regional</b>	
Amtrak	Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board	South Coast Air Quality Management District
Southern California Regional Rail Authority	Southern California Association of Governments
<b>County of Los Angeles</b>	
Board of Supervisors	Department of Health Services
Chief Executive Office	Department of Public Works
Fire Department	Department of Regional Planning
Sheriff's Department	
<b>City of Los Angeles</b>	
Office of the Mayor	Department of Transportation
City Council Members	Department of City Planning
Department of Building and Safety	Housing Authority
Community Redevelopment Agency	Office of Historic Resources
Convention and Visitors Bureau	Office of Emergency Management
Cultural Affairs Department	Public Works (Multiple Bureaus)
Los Angeles Library Commission	Department of Recreation and Parks
<b>Other</b>	
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments	Westside Cities Council of Governments
Gateway Cities Council of Governments	Los Angeles Conservancy
<b>Institutions</b>	
Los Angeles Public Library	Japanese American National Museum
Museum of Contemporary Art	

Table 7-1. List of Key Stakeholder Groups and Organizations (continued)

Key Stakeholder Groups and Organizations	
Schools, Colleges, and Universities	
Coburn School of Performing Arts	University of Southern California
Chambers of Commerce, Business Groups, and Developers	
Central City Association	Little Tokyo Business Association/Business Improvement District
Central City East Association	Historic Downtown Business Improvement District
Los Angeles River Artists and Business Association	Fashion District Business Improvement District
South Park Stakeholders Group	Downtown Center Improvement District
Related Incorporated	Kor Group
Thomas Properties Group	Japanese Chamber of Commerce for Southern California
Maguire Properties Group	Brookfield Property Management
Hines Property Management	Jamison Properties
Community Organizations, Neighborhood Groups, and Homeowner Associations	
Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council	Higgins Homeowners Association
Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council	Savoy Homeowners Association
Little Tokyo Community Council	Promenade West Homeowners Association
Religious Organizations	
Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels	Maryknoll Catholic Church
Centenary United Methodist Church	Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
First United Methodist Church of Los Angeles	Union Church of Los Angeles
Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple	Zenshiji Soto Mission
Koyasan Buddhist Temple	

Table 7-1. List of Key Stakeholder Groups and Organizations (continued)

Key Stakeholder Groups and Organizations	
Transit Advocacy Groups	
Southern California Transit Advocates	Transit Coalition
Fixing Angelenos Stuck in Traffic (FAST)	Move LA

### 7.4.1.3 Project Fact Sheets and FAQs

A series of project fact sheets were developed and distributed at community meetings, stakeholder briefings, and public events, as well as electronically, as necessary. The fact sheets included illustrative maps and graphics, the project overview, purpose and need, alternatives under review, summaries of the environmental process and schedule, and highlights of the community involvement process. These fact sheets were updated throughout the project development process. A set of FAQs was also developed and updated throughout the study to address key issues and questions about the project. Materials were provided in English, Spanish, Japanese, and Korean languages as appropriate. The fact sheets and FAQs were also made available on the project website at: <http://www.metro.net/regionalconnector>. Copies of materials from the AA study are located in the Final Alternatives Analysis Report (Appendix H), and materials for the Draft EIS/EIR are included in the Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Appendix (Appendix I Part 2).



### 7.4.1.4 Mailings, Flyers, and Electronic Mailings

Notification of scoping and subsequent public meetings was sent via postal and electronic mail to the addresses on the stakeholder database. Additionally, notices were posted on Metro’s website, and display advertisements were placed in multi-lingual publications (English, Spanish, Korean, and Japanese). “Take Ones” were placed on Metro buses and trains serving the project area. A press release was sent to 83 local, regional, ethnic, and multi-lingual publications as well as blogs and distributed to property owners and residential management companies located in the project area. Noticing was conducted in English, Spanish, Japanese, and as appropriate, in Korean.

Email blasts and electronic mailings were disseminated to all stakeholders in the database with email addresses, including elected officials, neighborhood councils, and community-based organizations. These groups were encouraged to forward these email blasts to their

constituents and/or members. Email blasts were typically used to distribute all meeting announcements and other project information instantly to large numbers of people.

Copies of the mailers, Fact Sheets, FAQs, "Take Ones", and e-bulletins from the AA study are located in the Final Alternatives Analysis Report (Appendix H), and materials for the Draft EIS/EIR can be found in the Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Appendix (Appendix I Parts 2, 3, and 4).

#### 7.4.1.5 Website, Social Networking, and Media Outreach

The project website (<http://www.metro.net/regionalconnector/>) serves as a central point where stakeholders can readily access current project-related information. The project website was initially used for the AA phase and was updated regularly during the Draft EIS/EIR and the Final EIS/EIR phases. Website content for the Regional Connector includes a project overview, schedule of upcoming meetings, summaries of past meetings and collateral materials including fact sheets, presentations materials, and other information from both the current and previous project phases. The website is updated at key study milestones.

In addition to the project website, in the fall of 2008, Metro launched the "Regional Connector" group on the Facebook social networking site. The Regional Connector Transit Corridor Facebook group has become a valuable tool in educating the public about the project. To date, 298 people have joined the Regional Connector Transit Corridor Facebook group. The Facebook group page can be viewed at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com), under Regional Connector Transit Corridor Study. A screenshot of the webpages taken from the AA study are located in the Final Alternatives Analysis Report (Appendix H), and materials for the Draft EIS/EIR are located in the Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Appendix (Appendix I Part 2).

At the conclusion of the Draft EIS/EIR process, a Facebook page was added, with the intention of retiring the group page. The page allows for more flexibility in sharing links, videos, photographs, and other media. Currently 158 people are following this page.

Additionally, Metro launched a Twitter account for the project. Under @metroconnector, anyone can follow the project, view links, and receive timely updates regarding outreach activities.

Metro has also taken a proactive role working with mainstream media outlets to publicize community meetings and to raise awareness of the Regional Connector Transit Corridor project. This includes the development of press releases and placement of display advertisements. This effort was complemented by outreach to grassroots, ethnic and niche print, broadcast and new media (such as Facebook, blogs, electronic news outlets, chat rooms, discussion boards, etc.), web-based press conferences, and Japanese, Spanish, and Korean-language media.

Copies of the newspaper display advertisements from the AA study are located in the Final Alternatives Analysis Report (Appendix H), and materials for the Draft EIS/EIR can be found in the Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Appendix (Appendix I Part 2). The publications where display advertisements were placed include:

- Rafu Shimpo (bilingual Japanese language)
- Nikkansan (Japanese language)
- Pacific Citizen (serving the Asian and Pacific Islander communities)
- Korean Times (Korean language)
- Garment and Citizen (bilingual Spanish language) (AA only, out of print)
- Daily Trojan
- Pasadena Star News
- Downtown News

These publications were selected both on the basis of readership and demographics in the Regional Connector project area, as well as connectivity to future destinations. There are additional media outlets that Metro and the outreach team contact; however, many do not have display advertising.

During the Draft EIS/EIR phase, Metro also launched “The Source,” a blog which is used to provide engaging and timely news about various Metro projects, including the Regional Connector, at key project milestones.

## 7.5 Government and Other Agency Consultation

### 7.5.1 Section 6002 of SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users)

Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) is intended to promote efficient project management by lead agencies and enhanced opportunities for coordination with the public and with other federal, state, local, and tribal government agencies during the project development process. As part of the environmental review process, the lead agency must identify as early as practicable, any other federal or non-federal agencies that may have an interest in the project, and invite such agencies to become participating agencies in the environmental review process.

Participating agency letters of invitation per Section 6002 of SAFETEA-LU were mailed to agencies at the onset of formal scoping in March 2009. Participating agency outreach efforts included an agency scoping meeting (described in the Final Scoping Report, Appendix G), agency coordination meetings, and coordination meetings with individual agencies, including, but not limited to, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the California Department of Transportation. Coordination efforts will be ongoing throughout the project development process.

SAFETEA-LU emphasizes public participation, requiring that the public participation plans of metropolitan planning processes “be developed in consultation with all interested parties and provide that all interested parties have reasonable opportunities to comment on the contents of the transportation plan.” SAFETEA-LU also expanded the definition of participation by “interested parties” to include partners, groups, and individuals who are affected by or involved with transportation in the appropriate county and the surrounding region. Examples stated include citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan. The PPP for this project was developed cognizant of compliance with SAFETEA-LU and conforms to the public participation requirements of NEPA, CEQA, and the FTA New Starts Program.

### 7.5.2 Section 106 Consultation

The extensive effort to contact, identify, and consult with various cultural groups and agencies to identify traditional cultural properties and cultural practices during the environmental planning process has been documented for the Section 106 consultation process. The purpose of consultation is to identify cultural resources and other concerns relating to the project’s potential effects on cultural resources. Information is sought from individuals and organizations likely to have knowledge of potential resources in the project area.

During the process of completing archival research and conducting field studies for historic resources, the team maintained communication with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and other jurisdictional agencies. Historical and cultural organizations consulted include the Los Angeles Conservancy, California SHPO, and City of Los Angeles Planning/Historic Preservation Department. The team conferred with the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) in Sacramento, local California Indian organizations, and interested public historical and cultural organizations.

A search of the sacred lands file of the NAHC was requested on June 3, 2009. As recommended by the NAHC, individuals who may have further knowledge on sacred or prehistoric cultural resources within the project area were contacted. These included individuals from the Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council, Gabrielino Tongva Nation, Gabrielino Tongva Territorial Tribal Nation, Los Angeles City/County Native American Heritage Commission, Ti’At Society, Gabrielino Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians, and the Gabrielino Tongva Tribe. Coordination with SHPO, interested parties of the NAHC, and Native American community is ongoing.

Metro continues to consult with SHPO regarding the project. The California SHPO concurred with the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for historic and cultural resources and with the finding of an adverse effect on historical properties (Appendices X and Y). Coordination with SHPO and tribes is ongoing and has included preparation and signing of a Memorandum of Agreement incorporating all relevant mitigation measures (see Appendix 3, Memorandum of Agreement with the California State Historic Preservation Officer).

### 7.5.3 Community Outreach during the Alternatives Analysis Phase

The AA public participation process included early scoping meetings, community update meetings, key stakeholder meetings, and elected officials briefings, as well as development and dissemination of informational materials, a project website, project information line, and media relations. The AA began in October 2007 and concluded in February 2009 when the Metro Board of Directors approved the AA and authorized the commencement of the Draft EIS/EIR.

#### 7.5.3.1 Early Scoping Meetings

Metro utilized an early public scoping process that was consistent with FTA's requirements for an AA. This "early scoping" process was designed to solicit input from stakeholders regarding the range of possible modes of transportation, potential alignments, and station locations prior to their further analysis in the AA. The official notification for the Regional Connector Transit Corridor early scoping process began with a notice published in Federal Register Volume 72 No. 210 on October 31, 2007. The official early scoping comment period was initially scheduled to continue until November 21, 2007, but was extended until November 30, 2007 at the request of several stakeholders.

As shown in Table 7-2, the early scoping process included two public scoping meetings where the general public was given the opportunity to provide verbal and written comments.

Meeting notices were mailed to over 500 addresses in the initial stakeholder database, supported by emails to 383 individuals and organizations. Notices were mailed on September 27, 2007. Email notices were sent out on October 23, 2007, with follow-up reminders sent on November 5, 2007. An electronic reminder to the community to submit comments was sent on November 21, 2007. Comments were accepted until November 30, 2007 which represented an extension of the original date of November 21, 2007.

**Table 7-2. Regional Connector Transit Corridor Early Scoping Meetings**

Location	Date And Time	Number Of Attendees
Los Angeles Central Public Library, Meeting Room A 630 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street, Los Angeles, CA	Tuesday, November 6, 2007; 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.	68
Japanese American National Museum 369 E. 1 <sup>st</sup> Street, Los Angeles, CA	Wednesday, November 7, 2007; 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.	49

A public scoping meeting invitation flyer for postal distribution within the project area was developed. Poster sized versions of the flyer were distributed to 43 locations throughout the project area, including at Metro Service Centers, offices of local elected officials, and at community, recreation, and senior centers. Information was also posted on Metro's website. Notices were also placed on Metro buses and trains serving the project area.

A media release was distributed to 83 local, regional, ethnic, and multi-lingual publications as well as broadcast media, blogs, and other online news and information outlets. Noticing was conducted in English, Spanish, and Japanese. Display advertisements were published in the following: Los Angeles Downtown News, Los Angeles Garment and Citizen (Bi-lingual English/Spanish), and Rafu Shimpo (newspaper serving the Little Tokyo area and the Japanese community in Los Angeles).



Before the close of the comment period, 88 comments were received. The majority of comments expressed supported the need for a Regional Connector to enhance the efficiency of the current and future rail system by providing through service between the Metro Blue Line, Gold Line, Gold Line Eastside Extension, and future Expo Line, and service to link these rail corridors directly to Union Station. Most supported either a Grand Avenue or a 1<sup>st</sup> Street alignment, below-grade (i.e., subway), and utilizing LRT technology. Several potential stations generated broad support, including in order of preference: Little Tokyo, 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro, Bunker Hill, Union Station, Main/1<sup>st</sup>, and Civic Center (i.e., in the northern portion of the project area).

Throughout the AA phase, there was widespread support for the Regional Connector moving forward into environmental review and clearance. This support was expressed not only by residents and business interests in downtown Los Angeles but also by transit riders and advocates from across the region.

Comments from these early scoping meetings indicate a nearly even split between supporters of a Grand Avenue alignment or a 1<sup>st</sup> Street alignment. Also receiving limited support was a 2<sup>nd</sup> Street alignment, as well as an extension of the Metro Blue Line. Limited preference was expressed for other routes such as 3<sup>rd</sup> and Flower Streets. There was also a small, but vocal, minority concerned with the lack of alignment options to provide connectivity with the southern portion of the project area, and the lack of existing transit options serving Central City East and the Toy District. Some felt that the alignment should move considerably south, using Alameda Street, to make a connection through these underserved areas directly to the 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station.

### 7.5.3.2 Agency Scoping Meeting

One agency scoping meeting was held during the early scoping period on October 30, 2007 at Metro Headquarters, located at One Gateway Plaza, Los Angeles and was attended by the following agencies:

- United States Transportation Security Administration
- Los Angeles County Community College District
- Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department – Transportation Security
- City of Los Angeles: Department of City Planning

- City of Los Angeles: Department of Public Works
- City of Los Angeles: Department of Cultural Affairs
- Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Southern California Regional Rail Authority

A summary of agency scoping comments and a full transcript of the agency scoping meeting are provided in the Final Alternatives Analysis Report (Appendix H).

### 7.5.3.3 Community Meetings

Subsequent to the close of the early scoping period, Metro hosted “Community Update” meetings in late February 2008 to present initial alternatives that reflected the public comments submitted during the early scoping period. The meeting dates and locations are listed in Table 7-3. The purpose of these meetings was to illustrate how public comment was incorporated into the decision-making process. Based on additional analysis and feedback, Metro identified eight alternatives for further study and presented these to the public in October 2008.

Metro held the final round of community meetings for the AA phase of the Regional Connector study in October 2008 to provide stakeholders with preliminary recommendations based on public input and technical analysis.

More than 220 people attended the community meetings, and more than 100 comments were received in all forms. The public indicated significant support for transit improvements in the area, as well as for building the Regional Connector underground to the extent possible. Due to the heavy vehicular and pedestrian traffic in downtown Los Angeles, stakeholders believed that aboveground rail would further congest this area. In addition, there are many festivals, films, and other events occurring in downtown Los Angeles and stakeholders did not want aboveground rail to disrupt these activities.

**Table 7-3. Regional Connector Transit Corridor Community Update Meetings**

Location	Dates and Time	Number Of Attendees
Japanese American National Museum 369 E. 1 <sup>st</sup> Street, Los Angeles, CA	Tuesday, February 26, 2008; 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.	59
Los Angeles Central Public Library 630 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street, Los Angeles, CA	Thursday, February 28, 2008; 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.	55
Los Angeles Central Public Library 630 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street, Los Angeles, CA	Thursday, October 16, 2008; 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.	54
Japanese American National Museum 369 E. 1 <sup>st</sup> Street, Los Angeles, CA	Tuesday, October 21, 2008; 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.	52

### 7.5.3.4 Stakeholder Briefings

A series of meetings with stakeholders were held prior to public scoping and agency meetings conducted in fall 2007. The briefings involved the following stakeholders:

- Metro Westside Central Service Sector Governance Council
- City of Los Angeles Downtown Street Standards Committee
- Grand Avenue Committee
- Central City Association
- Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council
- Little Tokyo Service Center
- Little Tokyo Community Council
- Historic Downtown Business Improvement District
- Bringing Back Broadway
- South Park Stakeholders Group
- Central City East Association
- Higgins Building Homeowners Association
- Elected officials briefings

A briefing for local elected officials and their staff during the scoping period was hosted on November 4, 2008. This briefing provided the project team feedback about the presentation, and provided the elected officials' offices notification about the upcoming meetings and preliminary information about the status of the project. The elected officials and agencies that participated in the briefings are detailed in the Draft EIS/EIR Final Scoping Report (Appendix G).

Elected officials continued to be supportive of the study, and were interested to learn about potential funding sources and phasing.

Additional briefings were held prior to the two rounds of community update meetings. The intent of the meetings was to provide elected officials an opportunity to preview the presentation and ask specific questions about the project. Briefings took place in February and October 2008.

A summary of outreach meetings conducted during the AA phase may be viewed in the Final Alternatives Analysis Report (Appendix H).

## 7.6 Community Outreach During the EIS/EIR Phase

### 7.6.1 Scoping Meetings

The Draft EIS/EIR was initiated in March 2009 with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register and the Notice of Preparation (NOP) sent to the State Clearinghouse on March 24, 2009. The NOP was distributed to agencies and organizations within the project corridor and to jurisdictions with an interest in the proposed project on March 24, 2009. NOP packages were sent to: 25 federal agencies, 48 state agencies, seven regional agencies (including utility providers), and 98 local agencies (including school districts and project area cities).

Four scoping meetings provided the public an opportunity to comment on the project purpose and need, the alternatives to be considered, and issues and areas of concern to be considered in the Draft EIS/EIR. The locations, dates, and number of attendees at each of these meetings are shown below in Table 7-4.

**Table 7-4. Regional Connector Transit Corridor Scoping Meetings**

Location	Date and Time	Number Of Attendees
Alumni Room, Davidson Conference Center University of Southern California 3415 S. Figueroa Street Los Angeles, CA 90007	Monday, March 30, 2009; 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.	24
Lake Avenue Church 393 N. Lake Avenue Pasadena, CA 91101	Tuesday, March 31, 2009; 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.	29
Japanese American National Museum 369 E. 1 <sup>st</sup> Street Los Angeles, CA 90012	Wednesday, April 1, 2009; 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.	45
Los Angeles Central Public Library 630 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street Los Angeles, CA 90071	Thursday, April 2, 2009; 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.	56

Prior to the public meetings, a media briefing was held at the initiation of scoping via a web-based conference system for newspapers, blogs, and local radio and television stations. At least five media groups participated in the media briefing. Other media groups who were unable to participate in the briefing and expressed interest were briefed individually.

The meetings were publicized via direct mail and email notices using the stakeholder database; postings on Metro’s website; display advertisements in multi-lingual publications (English, Spanish and Japanese); multi-lingual notices placed on Metro buses and trains serving the project area; a press release which was sent to 83 local, regional, ethnic, and multi-lingual publications as well as blogs; and through grassroots outreach to downtown Los Angeles property owners and residential management companies. Noticing was conducted in English, Spanish, and Japanese.

Display advertisements for the scoping meetings were placed in newspapers within the project area that were selected based on geographic focus, language needs, and audited circulation numbers. A list of newspapers and advertisement publication dates is provided in Table 7-5. Email blasts, or electronic mailings, were disseminated to all stakeholders in the database with email addresses, including elected officials, neighborhood councils, and community-based organizations. These groups were then asked to forward these email blasts to their constituents and/or members. Email blasts were utilized to distribute the scoping meeting announcements and other project information instantly and to large numbers of people.



**Table 7-5. Regional Connector Transit Corridor Study: Scoping Period Display Advertising**

Location	Publication Date
Garment and Citizen	3/13/09
Rafu Shimpo	3/13/09
Downtown News	3/13/09
Pasadena Star News	3/13/09
Daily Trojan	3/22/09

Electronic distribution of the meeting notices took place on March 16, 2009. Notices were sent to 721 email addresses within the updated project database. A copy of the email is included in Appendix I, Agency Coordination and Public Involvement. In addition, a second email was sent to database and Facebook group members on May 4, 2009 as a reminder for stakeholders to submit their comments before the comment deadline on May 11, 2009.

The scoping meetings began with an open house format to provide attendees an opportunity to review the project information before the start of the presentation and subsequent comment period. Project team members were present at the project display boards to answer questions related to the technical aspects of the project. A Spanish language interpreter was available at all meetings, with a Japanese language interpreter provided at the April 1, 2009 meeting in Little Tokyo.

A total of 126 comments were received before close of the public scoping period. Comments showed a strong recognition of the purpose and need for the Regional Connector LRT and significant support for the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative. The comments received expressing concern about or opposition to the project largely focused on its potential impacts, during both construction and operation, on Little Tokyo. Generally, most of the comments received related to purpose and need included a clear understanding of both the ultimate regional and local benefits of this project. Comments focused on the potential for increased system connectivity, improvements to existing congestion (especially in downtown Los Angeles), and to address station crowding.

There was considerable support for the need for the Regional Connector project as a whole, and for the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative specifically. A total of 74 of the 126 comments expressed unequivocal support for the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative, with three comments each supporting the TSM and the No Build Alternatives, citing concerns regarding the potential loss of parking and construction impacts. In addition, 16 comments expressly stated opposition to the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative.

Comments opposing the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative focused mainly on potential construction impacts to businesses in Little Tokyo and especially to one property owner of a single story commercial property at 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets (Señor Fish). Additionally, there was tremendous concern regarding the loss of parking for the commercial/retail area located at 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets, as many of the businesses along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street rely on this parking lot for their customers. The majority of the comments in opposition to the project were from the Little Tokyo area, including members of the local leadership in this community.

Those weighing in were also concerned about the potential for the rail line to split the community geographically. The LTCC and two local business owners cited their concern that the Little Tokyo neighborhood has shrunk over the years, as it has been replaced by other uses such as government buildings. The construction of the project was seen as having the potential to have a profound impact on the cultural identity of the neighborhood.

The majority of the comments Metro received about potential impacts of the Regional Connector related to traffic, transit, parking, and construction. While some of the comments reflected concerns about potential negative impacts and the need for related mitigation measures, some comments also expressed the likely positive impacts of the project, such as jobs creation, reduced congestion, enhanced ridership, and air quality improvements.

### 7.6.2 Agency Scoping Meeting

The Agency Scoping Meeting was held on Monday, April 13, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. at Metro, One Gateway Plaza in Los Angeles. Local, state, and federal agencies and other organizations that participated in the scoping meeting included:

- FTA
- United States General Services Administration
- State of California Department of Transportation
- Southern California Association of Governments
- County of Los Angeles Planning Department
- County of Los Angeles Fire Department
- County of Los Angeles Community and Senior Services Department
- City of Los Angeles Planning Department
- City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department
- City of Los Angeles Police Department

The agency representatives engaged in the presentation and discussion related to the Regional Connector. The agencies discussed their support for grade-separation, addressing station capacity issues at 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center and Union Stations, and the need for system connectivity.

### 7.6.3 Community Update Meetings

The purpose of the community update meetings was to provide an update to the community regarding the Regional Connector Transit Corridor Study. The first round of update meetings was held in November 2009 after Metro began work on the technical studies, initiated work to develop the urban design “tool kit,” and conducted a number of individual stakeholder meetings. A subsequent round of community update meetings was held in April 2010 shortly after Metro added the Fully Underground LRT Alternative (later designated as the LPA by the Metro Board of Directors in October 2010) to the Draft EIS/EIR for further study in the project. The conceptual design of the fully grade-separated alternative was not prepared in time for the initial round of community update meetings, so it was presented at the April 2010 community update meetings. There was door-to-door distribution of the meeting notice to the residents of the Savoy, and to the Little Tokyo businesses located between Alameda, Los Angeles, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Streets. In



In addition to the distribution of the meeting notices, businesses were provided with contact information in case they had additional questions about the project. They were also asked how best to provide project information to them in the future. The majority of those who responded asked that information be emailed to them.

Metro used a multi-media approach to informing the community of the update meetings. In addition to the distribution of a media notice, Metro representatives engaged many of the neighborhood and transportation related blogs. A postal and electronic notice was distributed to the stakeholder database. For the first round of community update meetings, advertisements were placed in the Korean Times, Garment and Citizen, Rafu Shimpō, Downtown News, and Pasadena Star News. For the second round of community update meetings, advertisements were placed in the same papers, with the addition of the Pacific Citizen newspaper. Publication dates are shown in Table 7-6. Meeting dates, locations, and attendance is shown in Table 7-7.

**Table 7-6. Regional Connector Transit Corridor Study:  
Community Update Meeting Display Advertising**

Location	Update #1	Update #2
Garment and Citizen	10/29/09	4/1/10
Rafu Shimpō	10/29/09	4/1/10
Downtown News	10/29/09	4/1/10
Pasadena Star News	10/29/09	4/1/10
Korean Times	10/29/09	4/1/10
Pacific Citizen		4/1/10

**Table 7-7. Community Update Meetings**

Location	Date and Time	Number Of Attendees
Lake Avenue Church 393 N. Lake Avenue Pasadena, CA 91101	Thursday, November 5, 2009; 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.	17
Japanese American National Museum 369 E. 1 <sup>st</sup> Street Los Angeles, CA 90012	Thursday, November 12, 2009; 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.	41
Japanese American National Museum 369 E. 1 <sup>st</sup> Street Los Angeles, CA 90012	Thursday, November 12, 2009; 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.	27

Table 7-7. Community Update Meetings (continued)

Location	Date and Time	Number Of Attendees
Los Angeles Central Public Library 630 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street Los Angeles, CA 90071	Tuesday, November 10, 2009; 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.	46
Wurlitzer Building 818 S. Broadway Los Angeles, CA 90014	Saturday, November 7, 2009; 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	27
Los Angeles Central Public Library 630 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street Los Angeles, CA 90071	Friday, April 9, 2010; 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.	40
Lake Avenue Church 393 N. Lake Avenue Pasadena, CA 91101	Tuesday, April 13, 2010; 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.	17
Japanese American National Museum 369 E. 1 <sup>st</sup> Street Los Angeles, CA 90012	Wednesday, April 14, 2010; 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.	35
Japanese American National Museum 369 E. 1 <sup>st</sup> Street Los Angeles, CA 90012	Wednesday, April 14, 2010; 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.	16
Los Angeles Theater 514 S. Spring Street Los Angeles, CA 90014	Saturday, April 17, 2010; 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.	10

#### 7.6.4 Stakeholder Briefings

In addition to the community update meetings, Metro conducted community and stakeholder briefings to homeowners associations, neighborhood councils, local agencies, property owners, and others in the project area. This targeted outreach effort involved emails or meetings with project status updates and location-specific information. The briefings involved the following stakeholders (a complete list is included in Appendix I, Agency Coordination and Public Involvement, Part 7):

- Bringing Back Broadway
- Central City Association
- Central City East Association
- City of Los Angeles: Community Redevelopment Agency: Little Tokyo Community Advisory Committee

- City of Los Angeles: Councilman Jose Huizar
- City of Los Angeles: City Planning – Office of Historic Resources
- City of Los Angeles: Department of Transportation
- City of Los Angeles: Public Works – Bureau of Engineering
- Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council
- Go For Broke
- Higgins Building Homeowners Association
- Japanese American National Museum
- Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Southern California
- Little Tokyo Business Association/Little Tokyo Business Improvement District
- Little Tokyo Community Council
- Little Tokyo Community Council: Planning, and Cultural Preservation Committee
- Little Tokyo Service Center
- Los Angeles Conservancy
- Los Angeles County: Flood Control
- Los Angeles County: Public Works
- Metropolitan News/Property Owners, Wilcox Building, 210 S. Spring Street
- Museum of Contemporary Art
- Nikkei Development
- Nishi Temple
- Property Owner, 700 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street
- Savoy Homeowners Association
- Thomas Properties Group
- University of Southern California

As a result of this stakeholder outreach, Metro formed a Working Group with the Savoy Homeowners Association to address residents' specific issues. This group met on an as-needed basis during the Draft EIS/EIR phase to address their concerns.

### 7.6.5 Elected Officials Briefings

Meetings were held with elected officials and/or their staff during and after the scoping process. In general, the briefings provided the project team feedback about the presentation, and provided offices with notification about the upcoming meetings and preliminary information about the status of the project. Briefings took place in March 2009, November 2009, February 2010, March 2010, and prior to the Draft EIS/EIR public hearings in September and October 2010. The elected officials and agencies that participated in these briefings are detailed in Appendix I, Agency Coordination and Public Involvement. An elected officials briefing was also held during the Final EIS/EIR phase in May 2011.

### 7.6.6 Urban Design Working Group

A key component of the station area planning process is urban design. The urban design process initiated in the AA phase was continued during the Draft EIS/EIR phase with the formation of the UDWG. The UDWG is composed of key stakeholders from the downtown Los Angeles communities of Little Tokyo, Historic Downtown, Financial District, and Bunker Hill. The goal of the UDWG is to:



- Facilitate discussion about the vision and identity of the Regional Connector and how individual station areas could be designed to fit within this framework.
- Provide a forum for critical analysis of land use, design, and linkages between stations along the line and their urban neighborhoods.
- Propose design considerations for station areas so they will fit appropriately within the surrounding urban context.
- Involve stakeholders with the Regional Connector planning team in a comprehensive station planning process.
- Facilitate discussion about sensitive areas to assist in the station location decision-making process so that alternative station locations can be resolved.
- Help ensure that planning for the corridor considers and builds upon the needs, desires, and policies of the communities.
- Assist in establishing guidelines and standards that may be helpful for future Metro transit corridor initiatives.

The UDWG participated in an initial urban design workshop on May 28, 2009 with focused follow-up meetings on June 16, 17, and 18, 2009 to discuss urban design concepts and potential station locations at three distinct geographic areas — the Financial District, Bunker Hill, and Little Tokyo/Historic Core. The UDWG examined localized issues, urban design guidelines, and specific geographic concerns regarding station locations and station design. The UDWG will be part of a continuing design process for the station area planning process in future phases of the project.



The UDWG met with the Little Tokyo stakeholders on February 2, 2011 to address issues specific to the LPA. The full UDWG met one more time thereafter so that Metro could share the new alternative and further discuss the urban design process.

#### 7.6.7 Little Tokyo Working Group Meetings

One of the highlights of the public outreach efforts during the Draft EIS/EIR phase of the Regional Connector was the formation of the LTWG. The Little Tokyo community in Los Angeles is one of only three remaining historic “Japantowns” in the United States. At one time Little Tokyo covered approximately one square mile, but today Little Tokyo occupies four large city blocks. Little Tokyo has decreased in physical size throughout the decades, beginning with the internment of Japanese Americans after Pearl Harbor, the subsequent expansion of the Civic Center in the 1960s, the construction of Parker Center and the Metropolitan Detention Center, and city redevelopment activities in the 1980s.

Since then, the Little Tokyo community has experienced impacts from the three-year construction effort for the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension. This included the construction of a new Little Tokyo/Arts District Station, as well as construction along Alameda Street between US 101 and 1<sup>st</sup> Street. The Regional Connector study began just as construction of the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension was ending, and a number of community members were sensitive to construction beginning again in Little Tokyo. In addition to the Regional Connector, the California High-Speed Rail project also initiated a Draft EIS/EIR, which showed potential impacts to the Little Tokyo community.

Against this background, and accompanied by perceptions about potential further shrinkage of this neighborhood, many community members saw the Regional Connector as one more encroachment into Little Tokyo. While this unease was evident during the AA, it grew during the Draft EIS/EIR phase and peaked when the Little Tokyo community coalesced against both proposed build alternatives being studied at the time: the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative and the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative, at several Metro Board and community meetings in the summer and fall of 2009. Both construction and operation of these build alternatives for the Regional Connector were perceived as negatively impacting the community’s cultural identity and economic viability because the proposed project could impact the

intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets, divide the community with a physical barrier, and create new safety concerns. Metro proposed a variety of potential mitigation measures to address these concerns through design treatments, but support for the project continued to diminish.

At this critical juncture for the Regional Connector, Metro recognized that the potential impacts of the project on this important historic, cultural, and ethnic community would raise environmental justice concerns. The agency responded by proactively engaging the Little Tokyo community in a focused and collaborative dialogue to address their concerns via the creation of the LTWG. The LTWG was formed collaboratively by Metro and the LTCC as a direct response to serious concerns voiced by Little Tokyo stakeholders about potential impact to this community from both construction and operation of the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative and At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative. (The LTCC is a non-profit membership-based organization whose mission is to ensure that Little Tokyo remains a viable center for the Japanese American community. The LTCC represents over 100 organizations, including business, residential, social service, and religious organizations.)

The role of the LTWG was to represent the community as it worked with Metro to identify key concerns, and discuss proposed mitigation measures that could address the construction and operational impacts of the Regional Connector. Approximately 30 community representatives typically attended these meetings. The LTWG's first meeting convened in early fall 2009 and the group continued to voice its concerns about the build alternatives. Concerns included impacts to businesses during construction and the long-term cultural survival of this community as a whole, as well as significant concerns about the loss of parking and security.



The LTWG then met approximately bi-weekly through the development and submittal of the Administrative Draft EIS/EIR in May 2010. At the LTWG's request, in early 2010, Metro provided funding for the LTWG to retain a consultant to assist the group with providing an in-depth understanding of the environmental process, and to identify and refine candidate mitigation measures to be included in the Draft EIS/EIR. Hiring of this consultant further helped build confidence between Metro and the community. LTWG meetings subsequently resumed on an approximately bi-weekly basis during the Final EIS/EIR phase of the project.

The collaboration of this stakeholder group and Metro was instrumental in the development of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative (later designated as the LPA in October 2010 by the Metro Board of Directors), an alternative that would be more acceptable to Little Tokyo stakeholders. During the AA, the community has been generally supportive of a below-grade alternative at 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets that had been dropped because necessary real estate was not available at the time. The property on the northeast corner of the intersection was involved in a City of Los Angeles procurement process and there was also a desire to avoid impacts to the Nishi Temple. However, with the selection of a developer for the Nikkei site at 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets eliminating the uncertainty at this location, and Metro's subsequent discussions with the Nishi Temple, this alternative found new life as a workable option.

In October 2009, the LTCC approved a motion from the LTWG asking Metro to study the Fully Underground LRT Alternative and consider adding this alternative to the Draft EIS/EIR. While there were continued concerns about construction impacts to the Little Tokyo community, the group was optimistic that the new build alternative would better fit the community's needs. At its February 2010 meeting, the Metro Board of Directors authorized the addition of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative to the Draft EIS/EIR for a full environmental evaluation. The Metro Board of Directors subsequently designated the Fully Underground LRT Alternative as the LPA in October 2010.

Little Tokyo community members attended the meeting in significant numbers to show their support for the new alternative and to commend Metro for addressing their concerns. Other key constituencies in downtown, including the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council, Central City Association, Higgins Building Homeowners Association, and Bringing Back Broadway Coalition, also testified to show their support for the outcomes of the LTWG. The formation of the LTWG, accompanied by Metro's willingness to implement a transparent and proactive process in engaging this community, collectively provided an extraordinary opportunity for stakeholder engagement to defuse potentially volatile environmental justice issues, and in the process build trust, widespread enthusiasm, and support for a critical transit initiative.

Each LTWG meeting was documented and summaries of the meetings that occurred during the Draft EIS/EIR phase of the project appear in the Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Appendix (Appendix I Part 5). Meetings with project area communities and stakeholders have occurred during the development of this Final EIS/EIR and are expected to continue on a regular basis throughout project development and construction. Meeting summaries are available through Metro.

## 7.7 Draft EIS/EIR Public Review Period and Public Hearings

The Draft EIS/EIR was released on September 3, 2010 for public review, with public hearings held on September 28, 2010 and October 4, 2010. The Draft EIS/EIR was placed in public libraries and other repository sites, and remains available on the project website. A complete repository listing is included in the NOA.

Metro developed a notice of these public hearings in compliance with CEQA and NEPA. To further alert the community to the availability of the Draft EIS/EIR, display and online advertising was placed, a postal mailer to 64,945 addresses was distributed to zip codes located in the project area and to addresses included in the project area database, and a series of email notices was distributed to those who had supplied the project team with an email address. The stakeholder list also included all those responding during the public scoping period.

The NOA was published in the Los Angeles Times, La Opinion (Spanish language) and the Rafu Shimpō. Display advertising was placed in the Downtown News, Rafu Shimpō, Nikkansan (Japanese), Korean Times (Korean), Our Weekly, and the Long Beach Press Telegram. Advertisements (separate from the legal NOA notices) were published two weeks prior to the public hearings. Online advertisements were placed on BlogDowntown, Facebook, Korean Times and Downtown News. The Facebook online advertisement ran through the course of the public comment period.

The project information line was updated with public hearing information as well as the locations where the document could be accessed. The information line is maintained in English, Spanish, Japanese and Korean. The information line did not receive any messages during the comment period.

Two weeks before the public hearings, over 500 hearing notices were distributed door-to-door to residential, retail, and commercial properties in Little Tokyo. This gave Metro representatives the opportunity to talk with the many business owners and other interested individuals in the area one-on-one.

One week prior to the public hearings, a notice of the public hearing was distributed to community, regional, and national media contacts. Additional outreach to local Spanish, Japanese, and Korean writers also took place, which garnered multi-language coverage. Copies of articles are available from Metro.

Metro hosted elected officials and Technical Agency Committee (TAC) briefings prior to the public hearings. The briefing schedule is shown in Table 7-8.

**Table 7-8. Elected Officials and Technical Agency Briefings**

Date	Purpose
Wednesday, September 8, 2010	Elected Officials Briefing
Thursday, September 9, 2010	Technical Agency Briefing

The first public hearing held on September 28, 2010 at the Japanese American National Museum (JANM) was broadcast live over the internet, and continues to be viewable on demand through [www.ustream.tv](http://www.ustream.tv). The link to the broadcast was made available from the project website for those who were unable to attend in person, or wished to view at a later time. The second public hearing was held at the City of Los Angeles – Police Department Headquarters on October 4, 2010. The same information was presented at both public hearings, with the majority of the meeting to hear public comments. At the conclusion of the public hearings, Metro posted an electronic copy of the presentation on the project's website.

Approximately 240 submissions were received during the public comment period for the Draft EIS/EIR, beginning on September 3, 2010 and concluding October 18, 2010. Comments were submitted verbally or in writing at the public hearings, and via email or postal mail. Some submissions contained multiple comments. An overview of these submissions is included in Chapter 9, Responses to Comments, of this Final EIS/EIR. Volumes F-2 and F-3, Responses to Comments on the Draft EIS/EIR, of this Final EIS/EIR contain copies of all written comments and public hearing transcripts, and provide Metro's written responses to all comments received.

The Metro Board of Directors met on October 28, 2010, and designated the Fully Underground Alternative as the LPA. In addition to the LPA, the Board also accepted the Draft EIS/EIR

document, and directed staff to begin work on Advanced Conceptual Engineering/Preliminary Engineering and this Final EIS/EIR.

## 7.8 Activities Since Close of the Draft EIS/EIR Public Review Period

The outreach effort continued after the close of the Draft EIS/EIR public review period. Metro continued to brief community groups and other stakeholder groups throughout the project area regarding the LPA, as well as hosted the Little Tokyo/Arts District Station Urban Design Workshop. Meetings focused attention on refinements made to the LPA since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR, which reduce overall project impacts. Meeting summaries are available from Metro.

### 7.8.1 Financial District

The adoption of the LPA included the removal of the Flower/5<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Street station from the project. However, Metro's Board of Directors asked staff to remain in contact with the Financial District stakeholders to discuss potential urban design changes that would improve the overall pedestrian experience along Flower Street and access to the existing 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station. Stakeholder meetings are listed in Table 7-9.

**Table 7-9. Financial District Stakeholder Meetings**

Date	Organizations Represented
November 15, 2010	Thomas Properties Group, Hines, Brookfield, Westin Bonaventure, Standard Hotel, California Club, Los Angeles Central Public Library, Maguire Properties Group
December 6, 2010	Central City Association
February 1, 2011	Thomas Properties Group
February 8, 2011	Pegasus Apartments: Landmark Management, Kor Group, Buchanan Street
March 10, 2011	Thomas Properties Group, Hines, Brookfield, Westin Bonaventure; Landmark Management, Kor Group, Buchanan Street, Central City Association, Standard Hotel, Maguire Properties Group
August 22, 2011	Hines
August 22, 2011	Thomas Properties Group

### 7.8.2 Grand Avenue

In January 2011, the Broad Art Foundation and the City of Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency announced plans to construct a museum on Grand Avenue, on property located adjacent to the 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street station area. In addition to coordinating the tunnel

alignment, Metro has been in close contact with the developer to address specific design concerns. Stakeholder meetings are listed in Table 7-10.

**Table 7-10. Grand Avenue Stakeholder Meetings**

Date	Organizations Represented
January 5, 2011	Related Companies, Broad Art Foundation
January 26, 2011	Promenade West Homeowners Association
February 1, 2011	Related Companies, Broad Art Foundation
February 14, 2011	Related Companies, Broad Art Foundation
March 22, 2011	Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County (Walt Disney Concert Hall)
April 5, 2011	Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County (Walt Disney Concert Hall)
May 25, 2011	Promenade West Homeowners Association
August 22, 2011	Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County (Walt Disney Concert Hall)
August 26, 2011	Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County (Walt Disney Concert Hall)

### 7.8.3 Broadway/Historic Core

The Metro Board of Directors voted on October 28, 2010 to remove the Wilcox and Olender Buildings from the list of proposed project acquisitions, resulting in the need to refine the anticipated project acquisitions area. Additionally, briefings for the Higgins Homeowners Association provided an update on potential station entrance configurations. Stakeholder meetings are listed in Table 7-11.

**Table 7-11. Broadway/Historic Core Stakeholder Meetings**

Date	Organizations Represented
November 10, 2010	Bringing Back Broadway – Transportation Committee
February 7, 2011	Higgins Building Homeowners Association
July 13, 2011	Bringing Back Broadway – Transportation Committee

### 7.8.4 Little Tokyo/Arts District

Refinements to the LPA include repositioning the 2<sup>nd</sup>/Central Avenue station closer to the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Central Avenue (referred to as “1<sup>st</sup>/Central Avenue station” in this Final EIS/EIR), and moving the TBM insertion site from 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to the Mangrove property. In response to community concerns regarding the potential impacts during cut and cover construction on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street between Alameda Street and San Pedro Street, Metro developed a refined alignment that avoids impacting a large storm drain on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, removes the need to do any cut and cover activity on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Little Tokyo, and reduces the amount of private property needed for the project. Metro initiated a series of meetings to present the refined alignment to the community for feedback, as shown in Table 7-12.

**Table 7-12. Little Tokyo Stakeholder Meetings**

Date	Organizations Represented
September 13, 2010	Little Tokyo Community Council – Consultant Task Force
September 28, 2010	Little Tokyo Community Council Meeting
November 2, 2010	Little Tokyo Business Association/Business Improvement District
November 23, 2010	Little Tokyo Community Council
December 7, 2010	Little Tokyo Working Group (Review of environmental and preliminary engineering process, schedule update)
December 16, 2010	Little Tokyo Community Council – Planning and Cultural Preservation Committee
January 10, 2011	Office of Councilwoman Jan Perry
January 12, 2011	Japanese American National Museum (Presentation of refined alignment)
January 12, 2011	Little Tokyo Community Council – Transit Issues Committee (Presentation of refined alignment)
January 13, 2011	Little Tokyo Business Association/Business Improvement District (Presentation of refined alignment)
February 3, 2011	Little Tokyo/Arts District Station Urban Design Working Group
February 9, 2011	Central City East Association
February 17, 2011	Little Tokyo Working Group (Discuss TBM activities)
February 24, 2011	Little Tokyo Working Group (Discuss construction activities)

Table 7-12. Little Tokyo Stakeholder Meetings (continued)

Date	Organizations Represented
February 25, 2011	Japanese Village Plaza
March 7, 2011	Los Angeles River Artist and Business Association
March 8, 2011	Zenshuji Soto Mission
March 15, 2011	Little Tokyo Working Group (Mitigation measures overview)
March 17, 2011	Related Properties (Hikari and Block 8 Developer)
March 22, 2011	Little Tokyo Community Council
March 23, 2011	Little Tokyo Business Association/Business Improvement District
April 26, 2011	Central City East Association: Industrial District BID
April 26, 2011	Little Tokyo Community Council
May 17, 2011	Little Tokyo Business Association/Business Improvement District
May 24, 2011	Little Tokyo Community Council
June 28, 2011	Little Tokyo Community Council
July 26, 2011	Little Tokyo Community Council
September 2, 2011	Japanese American National Museum

### 7.8.5 Project Area-Wide

Two community update meetings took place in May 2011, providing the community with information regarding the refined LPA, an update on the project schedule, and what to expect at the release of this Final EIS/EIR.

In addition to the community update meetings, briefings have taken place with other project stakeholders as shown in Table 7-13. The purpose of the meetings was to keep key stakeholders aware of the project refinements as they occurred.

Table 7-13. Project Area-Wide Stakeholder Meetings

Date	Organizations Represented
November 12, 2010	Central City Association – Transportation Infrastructure Committee
January 7, 2011	City of Los Angeles – Downtown Streets Standards Committee
January 11, 2011	Office of Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard
February 1, 2011	Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council – Transportation Forum
February 4, 2011	City of Los Angeles – Downtown Streets Standards Committee
February 10, 2011	City of Los Angeles – Department of Transportation City of Los Angeles – Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering
March 14, 2011	Office of Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard
March 18, 2011	Los Angeles Conservancy City of Los Angeles: Department of City Planning: Office of Historic Resources
June 21, 2011	Community Update Meeting
June 29, 2011	Community Update Meeting
June 30, 2011	Community Update Meeting

## 7.9 Accommodations for Minority, Low-Income, and Persons with Disabilities

Metro made significant efforts to ensure minority, low-income, and disabled persons were included in all outreach efforts. This has included sensitivity to multiple distribution channels and language needs, but also to selection of transit accessible venues in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101-12213. Simultaneous translations were available at each community meeting. Spanish translation was provided at every public meeting. Spanish, Japanese, and Korean simultaneous translation was provided at meetings taking place in Little Tokyo.



In addition to direct mail and electronic notifications of meetings, Metro provided 10-day advance notice on buses and trains serving the project area to ensure that transit users were aware of opportunities to attend the meetings. Furthermore, bi-lingual (Japanese/English, Spanish/English, Korean/English) meeting notices were placed in parks, libraries, community centers, and non-profits in the project area as appropriate. Multi-lingual informational “take-one” handouts were placed on buses and trains throughout the project area.

As noted, federal requirements for public participation plans include a process for seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and/or minority groups. Metro actively worked with organized business and community groups in Little Tokyo and downtown Los Angeles, homeless and social service providers in the project area, and transit advocacy organizations to ensure project information and public meetings were adequately publicized.

## 7.10 Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections Public Review Period

The Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections was released on July 22, 2011. The Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections was placed in public libraries and other repository sites, and remains available on the project website. A complete repository listing is included in the NOA.

Approximately 31 submissions, totaling approximately 263 discrete comments, were received during the public comment period for the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections, beginning on July 22, 2011 and concluding September 6, 2011. An overview of these submissions is included in Chapter 9, Responses to Comments, of this Final EIS/EIR. Volume F-4, Responses to Comments on the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections, of this Final EIS/EIR contains copies of all written comments, and provides Metro’s written responses to all comments received.

