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October 18, 2010

Ms. Dolores Roybal-Saltarelli
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza, MS 99-22-2
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Comments on Draft EIS/EIR for Regional Connector

Dear Ms. Roybal-Saltarelli:

I speak as the Public Policy Coordinator of the Japanese American Citizens League, Pacific Southwest District. Our organization, as a Little Tokyo community-based organization, supports the Fully-Underground Regional Connector option as the ONLY acceptable alternative for the Metro Regional Connector. We appreciate the continuous dialogue that MTA has engaged in with Little Tokyo nonprofits, residents and small businesses. The positive working relationship and open dialogue have helped the community actively participate in the process to date.

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The JACL Pacific Southwest District is a member of the Little Tokyo Community Council (LTCC). As an active participant with the LTCC Preservation and Planning Committee as well as the LTCC Transit Committee, we would also like to reiterate the 6 major comments on the Draft EIR/EIS provided by the LTCC:

1) The LTCC strongly supports Metro's finding that "the Draft EIS/EIR does designate the Fully Underground LRT Alternative...as a staff recommended Preferred Alternative based on the technical analysis...and input received from the community." We concur that the Fully Underground Alternative "was developed to best address community concerns simultaneous with cost, operational, and design concerns." Further, the analysis the EIS/EIR shows it is clearly the best performing alternative from a ridership, travel time savings, environmental, cost-effectiveness, and social impact perspective. It is also nearly the cheapest alternative to operate and maintain over time. From the Little Tokyo community perspective, it is the only alternative that adequately addresses our concerns about environmental, economic, social, and cultural impacts to the community. The other alternatives pose significant disproportionate impacts on Little Tokyo.

2

2) The EIS/EIR should correct its assessment of the impacts of the At-Grade Emphasis and Underground Emphasis alternatives. The draft understates the environmental impacts on the Little Tokyo community of the grade separations required along Alameda Street that would physically bisect the Little Tokyo community, potential impacts if tunnel boring were to be initiated from 2nd/Central, and the aesthetic impacts associated with at-grade LRT operations through our community. As such, these two alternatives would place disproportionate burdens on a minority community in the areas of Transit Service Equity Deterioration and Community and Neighborhood Impacts.

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3) If Metro cannot commit to initiate TBM activities at 2nd/Flower/Hope until Preliminary Engineering is complete, the EIS/EIR should more clearly distinguish the extent and duration of construction impacts that could affect Little Tokyo if boring begins at 2nd/Central. This information is critical to determining whether the community will endure disproportionate impacts during construction activities. [kristin's note: to reiterate and be resolute: we absolutely do not want tunnel boring to begin in Little Tokyo, as we believe it will severely disrupt community and economic life]

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4) While many mitigation measures are identified throughout the document, the recommendations from the LTCC are segregated as a package of candidate measures to be considered by Metro and FTA. Please confirm the process for approving mitigation measure recommendations and whether this differs from mitigation measures cited elsewhere in the document.

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5) The LTCC calls for Metro to formalize an agreement with the Little Tokyo community that provides us with a substantial role in decision-making during the Preliminary Engineering, Final Design, and construction phases that addresses:

- Little Tokyo's formal involvement in the development and approval of mitigation measures for the Little Tokyo community,
- Little Tokyo's formal involvement in the monitoring of mitigation measures through the Mitigation Monitoring Plan,
- How to provide a sufficient safety net for Little Tokyo businesses that will be affected during construction,
- Redevelopment of the Office Depot block

6

6) The Draft EIS/EIR does not reflect the language adopted by the LTCC on May 25, 2010 that included refinements to its comments on the pending environmental analysis. These changes stem from additional comments from the Little Tokyo community in late April and amend comments that were transmitted to Metro in our letter dated April 27, 2010. The approved changes are shown in underline.

- Expand the safety net for Little Tokyo businesses that will be affected during construction. This can include having Metro provide additional financial and other resources to the community and/or businesses to provide more targeted marketing, as well as financial compensation to local businesses for any loss in gross sales. The process for establishing eligibility, quantifying financial assistance or compensation, and related details would be established jointly between Metro and Little Tokyo stakeholders.

7

- Metro shall work with the Little Tokyo community businesses to ensure no adverse impacts to business operations prior to relocation of or protection of in-place utilities and during construction activities. The LTCC and Metro shall consider establishing a Business Interruption Committee that will streamline Metro's communication with the community and avoid adverse business interruptions. This committee shall include local businesses and property owners.

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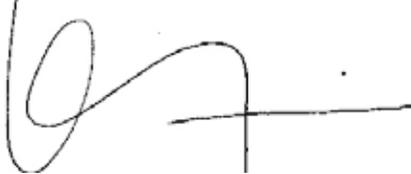
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In conclusion, I would like to thank Metro again for their willingness to open the planning process to the community, and strongly hope that such a positive working relationship will continue in the future. Little Tokyo is an important place of history and community for Japanese Americans and everyone else, and ensuring the preservation of Little Tokyo is essential. The Fully Underground alternative is the only build option that allows for this, and therefore I urge the MTA Board to select this as the Locally Preferred Alternative. This is, however, an acceptable alternative only by securing proper mitigations. Our biggest concern right now, to reiterate, is proper business mitigations, as well as minimizing impact to Little Tokyo. We also want to be sure that the Little Tokyo community remains an integral part of future conversations on this project, and that our comments and input are given the proper attention.

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Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to continuing to work with Metro to address appropriate mitigation measures that will address our community's concerns.

Sincerely,



Kristin Fukushima
Public Policy Coordinator
Japanese American Citizens League, Pacific Southwest District

CN4**Responses to Comments from Japanese American Citizens League - Pacific Southwest District, Fukushima, Kristin****Response to Comment CN4-1**

Thank you for your comment. Support for the Fully Underground LRT Alternative is noted. The Metro Board of Directors voted on October 28, 2010 to designate the Fully Underground LRT Alternative as the Locally Preferred Alternative.

Response to Comment CN4-2

Thank you for your comment. Support for the Fully Underground LRT Alternative is noted. Please refer to Responses to Comments CN4-3 through CN4-10, below, for detailed responses to concerns raised by the commenter.

Response to Comment CN4-3

The impacts of the proposed pedestrian bridge and roadway underpass in Little Tokyo were discussed in Sections 4.17.3.3.2 and 4.17.3.4.2 of the Draft EIS/EIR and this Final EIS/EIR, respectively. The potential impacts of beginning tunnel boring machine operations at 2nd and Central were described in Section 4.18.3.4 of the Draft EIS/EIR. Impacts were adequately analyzed in the Draft EIS/EIR. Disproportionate impacts on the Little Tokyo community were analyzed in Section 4.17, Environmental Justice, of the Draft EIS/EIR and this Final EIS/EIR. The Metro Board of Directors voted on October 28, 2010 to designate the Fully Underground LRT Alternative as the Locally Preferred Alternative. The refined Locally Preferred Alternative would not involve construction of any pedestrian bridges or roadway underpasses in Little Tokyo, and would not involve starting tunnel boring machine operations at 2nd and Central. Tunnel boring machine operations would instead begin at the Mangrove property as indicated in Section 4.18, Construction Impacts, of this Final EIS/EIR which is farther from the center of Little Tokyo and would involve fewer impacts.

Response to Comment CN4-4

Please refer to Response to Comment CN1-4, above.

Response to Comment CN4-5

The mitigation measure recommendations were segregated in the Draft EIS/EIR because they are a distinct part of the environmental justice outreach process. Like all other appropriate mitigation measures in the Draft EIS/EIR, feasible measures from the Little Tokyo Working Group recommendations have been incorporated into the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8). The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative, Chapter 8, contains final mitigation measures for the Locally Preferred Alternative; the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program will be approved by the Metro Board of Directors upon certification of this Final EIS/EIR. These mitigation measures will also be included in a Record of Decision subsequently issued by FTA. Metro will formally commit to implement all mitigation measures in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative upon certification of this Final EIS/EIR and issuance of the Record of Decision by FTA.

Response to Comment CN4-6

Metro intends to undertake all of the listed activities. The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8) of this Final EIS/EIR and Record of Decision to be issued by FTA are the formalized commitments to implement mitigation measures. Metro will involve the community throughout the project process. Based on the refinements to the Locally Preferred Alternative, only the northern portion of the block bounded by 1st Street, Central Avenue, 2nd Street, and Alameda Street would need to be acquired as part of the Locally Preferred Alternative for the 1st/Central Avenue station site. The Señor Fish, Weiland Brewery, associated parking, and the former Café Cuba (The Spice Table) would still need to be displaced. However, the remaining businesses on that block would remain, including the Office Depot and associated parking.

Response to Comment CN4-7

Please refer to Response to Comment CN1-7, above.

Response to Comment CN4-8

This mitigation measure has been recorded in Section 4.17.4.2 of this Final EIS/EIR as one of the mitigation measures suggested by the Little Tokyo community. Metro has identified measures in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8) of this Final EIS/EIR that will provide support for the Little Tokyo businesses. This could take the form of in-kind advertising, Metro-sponsored coupons, city-wide advertising that Little Tokyo is open for business during construction, and similar supportive measures.

Response to Comment CN4-9

Please refer to Response to Comment CN2-9, above.

Response to Comment CN4-10

Thank you for your comment. Metro has met and will continue to meet with the Little Tokyo community groups regarding the Regional Connector Transit Corridor project. Support for the Fully Underground LRT Alternative is noted. The Metro Board of Directors voted on October 28, 2010 to designate the Fully Underground LRT Alternative as the Locally Preferred Alternative.

During preparation of this Final EIS/EIR, Metro held meetings with community groups, which included the Little Tokyo community, and identified municipal leaders to guide them in the decision-making process as it relates to the proposed station locations, alignment options, and anticipated mitigation measures. Input from the community was incorporated into the refinement of the Locally Preferred Alternative and the mitigation measures presented in this Final EIS/EIR.

JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

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October 10, 2010

Ms. Dolores Roybal-Saltarelli Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority One Gateway Plaza, MS 99-22-2 Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Comments on Draft EIS/EIR for Regional Connector

Dear Ms. Roybal-Saltarelli:

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Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to continuing to work with Metro to address appropriate mitigation measures that will address our community's concerns.

Sincerely,



CN5

Responses to Comments from Japanese American Citizens League - Pacific Southwest District, Potter, Meghan**Response to Comment CN5-1**

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Response to Comment CN5-2

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Response to Comment CN5-3

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During preparation of this Final EIS/EIR, Metro held meetings with community groups, which included the Little Tokyo community, and identified municipal leaders to guide them in the decision-making process as it relates to the proposed station locations, alignment options, and anticipated mitigation measures. Input from the community was incorporated into the refinement of the Locally Preferred Alternative and the mitigation measures presented in this Final EIS/EIR.



October 6, 2010

Ms. Dolores Roybal-Saltarelli
 Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
 One Gateway Plaza, MS 99-22-2
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Comments on Draft EIS/EIR for Regional Connector

Dear Ms. Roybal-Saltarelli:

The Japanese American Cultural & Community Center is an active participant in the Little Tokyo Community Council, and have hosted many of the community meetings regarding the proposed Regional Connector. We take this opportunity to submit our letter of concurrence with the position stated by Little Tokyo Community Council (LTCC) in their letter of October 1, 2010.

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LTCC comments addressed the following:

1. The LTCC strongly believes that the Fully Underground alternative is the only acceptable option as the Locally Preferred Alternative that addresses its concerns about the environmental, economic, social, and cultural impacts to the community. As such, it supports Metro's finding that "the Draft EIS/EIR does designate the Fully Underground LRT Alternative...as a staff recommended Preferred Alternative based on the technical analysis...and input received from the community." Please note that our support for the Fully Underground alternative is contingent on satisfactory acceptance of LTCC's proposed mitigation measures identified on April 27, 2010. The other alternatives pose significant, disproportionate impacts on Little Tokyo that are unacceptable.
2. The EIS/EIR should correct its assessment of the impacts of the At-Grade Emphasis and Underground Emphasis alternatives. The draft understates the environmental impacts on the Little Tokyo community of the grade separations required along Alameda Street that would physically bisect the Little Tokyo community, potential impacts if tunnel boring were to be initiated from 2nd/Central, and the aesthetic impacts associated with at-grade LRT operations through our community.
3. In its letter to Metro dated April 27, 2010, the LTCC strongly urged Metro to initiate tunnel boring activities from 2nd/Flower/Hope to minimize construction impacts on the Little Tokyo community. This information is critical to determining whether the community will endure disproportionate impacts during construction activities.

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