



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Transit  
Administration**

REGION IX  
Arizona, California,  
Hawaii, Nevada, Guam,  
American Samoa,  
Northern Mariana Islands

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SEP 04 2012

Mr. Arthur T. Leahy  
Chief Executive Officer  
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
One Gateway Plaza  
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2592

Re: Supplemental Environmental Assessment and Finding  
of No Significant Impact for the Crenshaw/LAX Transit  
Corridor Project

Dear Mr. <sup>ART</sup>Leahy:

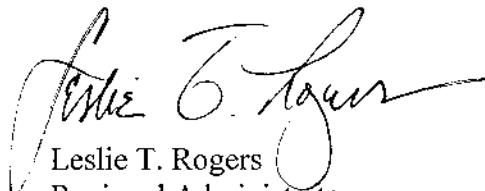
Based on our review of the Supplemental Environmental Assessment, dated July 2, 2012, for the Crenshaw/LAX Transit Corridor Project, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). A copy of the FONSI is enclosed.

The FONSI and supporting documentation should be made available to affected government agencies and the public and should be posted on the project website. A Notice of Availability for the FONSI should be published in local newspapers and should also be provided directly to affected government agencies, including the State intergovernmental review contacts established under Executive Order 12372.

Please note that the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the City of Los Angeles will be required to undertake the mitigation measures identified in the Final Environmental Impact Statement/Final Environmental Impact Report and the Supplemental Environmental Assessment.

Thank you for your cooperation in meeting the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. If you have questions about our review, please call Ms. Mary Nguyen of our Los Angeles Metropolitan Office at (213) 202-3960.

Sincerely,

  
Leslie T. Rogers  
Regional Administrator

Enclosure

## Finding of No Significant Impact

**Grant Applicant:** Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA)

**Project Sponsor:** Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

**Proposed Project:** Crenshaw/LAX Transit Corridor Project

The Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) for this project was prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. § 4332); Federal Transit Laws (49 U.S.C. §§ 5301(e), 5323(b), and 5324(b)); Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (49 U.S.C. § 303); and Executive Order 12898 (Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations).

**Description:** On December 30, 2011, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued a Record of Decision (ROD) on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Crenshaw/LAX Transit Corridor Project (Project). The Project consists of an 8.5-mile fixed guideway that begins from a southern terminus at the Metro Green Line, and follows the Harbor Subdivision Railroad right-of-way (ROW), adjacent to Aviation Boulevard and Florence Avenue, and continues northeast to Crenshaw Boulevard where it would travel north largely within the Crenshaw Boulevard right-of-way to the Exposition/Crenshaw Station, adjacent to the Exposition Line. The Project will include six transit stations, a vehicle maintenance storage facility near Arbor Vitae Street and Bellanca Avenue, park-and-ride lots at the Florence/La Brea, Florence/West and Crenshaw/Exposition Stations, traction power substations, and the acquisition of rail vehicles and maintenance equipment.

Since the ROD, modifications to the project design have occurred during the preliminary engineering phase to reduce cost, reduce right-of-way impacts, reduce utility impacts, improve light rail transit (LRT) operations, and improve traffic circulation and pedestrian crossings. The specific proposed project modifications addressed in the EA include the following:

1. Relocation of the station and portal for the optional off-street Crenshaw/Vernon Station
2. Relocation of the station and name change for the optional Aviation/Manchester Station, now referred to as the optional Florence/Hindry Station
3. Shift of segments of the LRT alignment into the former Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad ROW made possible by the abandonment of the freight track. The shift of the alignment involves the demolition of two BNSF railroad bridges at Florence Avenue and I-405, and at Aviation Boulevard and Century Boulevard.
4. Street, driveway, and pedestrian crossing improvements, which include:
  - Street modifications to allow for the provision of bus bays
  - Driveway and sidewalk modifications to improve traffic circulation and pedestrian crossings
  - Mid-block pedestrian crossing of LRT tracks between Eucalyptus and Inglewood Avenues

The relocation of the optional off-street Crenshaw/Vernon Station would reduce the cost of a below-grade station by reducing property impacts and minimizing other impacts. Similarly, relocation of the optional Aviation/Manchester Station (now named Florence/Hindry Station) from an aerial station to an at-grade station would also reduce costs. This optional Aviation/Manchester Station was shifted to Florence and Hindry Avenues to ensure that the alignment for the station platforms could accommodate future three car trains (also known as three light rail vehicles).

During the preparation of the FEIS, negotiations for the abandonment of the BNSF line and relinquishment of the right-of-way to LACMTA were ongoing. As agreements with BNSF were finalized in 2012 following the issuance of the ROD, it was determined that the alignment of the LRT could be shifted into the abandoned railroad right-of-way. This would reduce construction costs, property acquisitions, and utility relocations required for the Project. The change in the alignment also would reduce the curves in the alignment which, in turn, would improve operations.

The FEIS identified the types of equipment at the crossings and features along the corridor that would be required for the Project. During preliminary engineering and in consultation with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), designs for street, driveway and sidewalk modifications were refined to accommodate, where feasible, crossing gates, center medians at crossings, equipment, bus bays, and other amenities to facilitate vehicular and pedestrian circulation. Additional pedestrian crossing improvements, including a mid-block pedestrian crossing, were included in response to public comments.

**Environmental Effects:** Pursuant to the requirements of NEPA (42 U.S.C. § 4321 *et seq.*; 23 C.F.R. Part 771), FTA and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) prepared a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) on July 2, 2012 to evaluate potential environmental effects of the Project. FTA served as lead agency under NEPA for the Project and LACMTA was a joint lead agency. The EA concluded that implementation of the project modifications would cause no significant adverse effects that could not be mitigated. This applies to all applicable environmental elements, including aesthetic and visual resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, environmental justice, hazardous materials, land use and zoning, noise and vibration, public services and utilities, recreation and Section 4(f) resources, safety and security, social impacts, transportation and circulation. Mitigations identified in the EA had previously been identified in the FEIS.

After reviewing the EA and supporting documents, including public comments and responses to those comments, FTA finds under 23 C.F.R. § 771.121 that the proposed project, with mitigation measures LACMTA has committed to implement, will have no significant adverse impact on the environment. The record provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement is not required. FTA also finds, in accordance with Federal Transit Law at 49 U.S.C. § 5324(b), that an adequate opportunity to present views was given to all parties with significant economic, social, cultural, or environmental interests and that the preservation and enhancement of the environment and the interest of the community in which the Project is located were considered.

FTA has issued an errata to the EA, clarifying statements related to the number and types of property acquisitions required for the Project and a temporary construction easement proposed at the May Company Building. That errata is attached as Attachment C. The

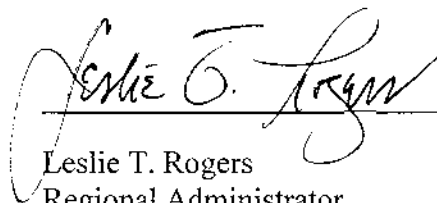
proposed action would result in two full acquisitions, 20 partial acquisitions, and nine temporary construction easements, and the demolition of the two BNSF railroad bridges. Shifting the alignment into the former BNSF ROW reduces the ROW required for the Project and avoids 29 full acquisitions, 23 partial acquisitions and 28 subsurface easements (a total of 80 parcels avoided). One of the temporary construction easements, consisting of 165 square feet, is located at the former May Company Building, now a Macy's department store, a historic property eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. On June 26, 2012, FTA received concurrence from the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) that the project modifications would occur within the Area of Potential Effects, as identified in the FEIS, and the project modifications would have no adverse effect on the historic property, thereby satisfying the requirements and recommendations of 36 C.F.R. Part 800. The letters of consultation with SHPO are provided in Appendix E of the EA.

The proposed project modifications, including the temporary occupancy of a 165 square foot temporary construction easement located at the former May Company Building will not result in a use of any Section 4(f) property.

As required by NEPA, a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the EA for the project modifications was mailed directly to agencies and individuals. Over 4,000 notifications were mailed and emailed to four local news publications, federal, state and local agencies, and elected officials, as well as to community organizations, stakeholders, and individuals, residents, and businesses within a quarter-mile of the project site. A complete list of agencies and organizations notified and receiving the EA is included in Section 6 of the EA. In addition, the NOA and the EA were also posted on the project web site. Hard copies of the EA were also available for public review at fifteen libraries.

The public has been afforded adequate opportunity to comment on the EA. Public comment was sought, and comments were received during the 30-day public review period from July 2 to August 2, 2012. A public hearing was also held on July 17, 2012. Ten public agencies commented on the EA. Nineteen individuals and representatives of community organizations also provided comments, five in the form of letters and e-mail and 14 provided orally at the public hearing. A summary of comments and responses to those comments is attached as Attachment A.

**Environmental Findings:** In accordance with 23 C.F.R. Part 771, finds, on the basis of the analysis, reviews, and mitigation measures discussed above, that there are no significant impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project modifications. LACMTA has incorporated mitigation measures into the Project to reduce or eliminate potentially adverse environmental impacts during the construction period on transportation, visual and aesthetics, air quality, noise and vibration, and ecosystems (modification and removal of trees).



Leslie T. Rogers  
Regional Administrator  
FTA Region IX

SEP 01 2012

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Date