Comment Letters Received from Organizational Stakeholders
September 18, 2019

Mr. Phil Washington  
Chief Executive Officer, LA Metro  
1 Gateway Plaza  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Washington,

On behalf of the constituents of Council District Four and the residents of Sherman Oaks, I am writing to express my strong support for a fully underground Sepulveda Transit Corridor concept, and advocate for a project that will best serve San Fernando Valley residents today and meet expected ridership numbers in the decades to come.

Angelenos spend an average of 81 hours per year on our roads in traffic. This includes the more than 400,000 people who travel between the San Fernando Valley and the Westside for work, school, and other activities every day. Over the next 40 years, our population is expected to grow by 2.3 million people, and commute times, traffic, congestion and air pollution are anticipated to increase as a result.

Allowing money to drive the concept selection process at this point would do a disservice to the voters who overwhelmingly supported Measure M and those who will use the system in the decades to come. As such, I have significant concerns about any concept that fails to account for the ridership needs of tomorrow while disproportionately impacting Valley residents today.

The monorail alternative (MRT 1) presented by Metro presents a number of potential obstacles, including utility disruptions (particularly impacts to the Metropolitan Water District’s Sepulveda Feeder that runs under Sepulveda Blvd and the LADWP owned 8” steel line that runs parallel to the Sepulveda Feeder ending at Royal Ridge Road), impacts to ingress and egress for residents east of Sepulveda Boulevard, disruptions to private property owners and local businesses near Sepulveda Boulevard and Dickens Street, and noise impacts to residential neighborhoods, among others.

The HRT 3 option also comes with a series of potential neighborhood impacts, and like MRT 1, disproportionately affects the San Fernando Valley by proposing above ground segments on the northern portion of the line and underground segments to the south. All this while achieving a relatively meager estimated cost savings, approximately 10 percent, compared to the fully underground HRT 1 and HRT 2 concepts.
The Westside and San Fernando Valley sub-regions are equal financial partners in the project and they should be treated as such. Big ideas and bold action will be needed to build a public transportation system that serves not only the commuters of today, but also those of tomorrow.

I am not inclined to support any above ground tracks on the streets of Sherman Oaks as currently proposed, and I respectfully request that Metro clearly prioritize Heavy Rail viability in its Pre-Development Agreement solicitations and remain focused on putting the quickest and highest-capacity rail project into what is one of the most congested traffic corridors in the country.

I would also like to encourage Metro and those participating in the pre-development agreement process to explore a variety of existing and new financing, construction and operating models that put Angelenos and the long-term viability of public transportation in Los Angeles first, and clearly state that the fastest and highest capacity options, all of which are heavy rail, are the Authority’s goal and preference.

Sincerely,

David E. Ryu
Councilmember, City of Los Angeles, District Four

Cc:

James Butts, Chair, Metro Board of Directors
Eric Garcetti, Vice Chair, Metro Board of Directors
Hilda L. Solis, 2nd Vice Chair, Metro Board of Directors
Kathryn Barger, Board Member, Metro Board of Directors
Mike Bonin, Board Member, Metro Board of Directors
John Bulinski, Nonvoting Board Member, Metro Board of Directors
Jacquelyn DuPont-Walker, Board Member, Metro Board of Directors
John Fasana, Board Member, Metro Board of Directors
Robert Garcia, Board Member, Metro Board of Directors
Janice Hahn, Board Member, Metro Board of Directors
Paul Krekorian, Board Member, Metro Board of Directors
Sheila Kuehl, Board Member, Metro Board of Directors
Ara Najarian, Board Member, Metro Board of Directors
Mark Ridley-Thomas, Board Member, Metro Board of Directors
Dear Neighbor:

Los Angeles Metro is currently developing plans for their Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project, and it is important for you to get involved in the process.

The Sepulveda Pass is one of the busiest travel corridors in the country, with more than 400,000 people commuting through the San Fernando Valley to the Westside and beyond every day.

With the overwhelming passage of Measure M, a sales tax measure set to generate $120 billion over 40 years to expand alternative transportation, Angelenos laid the groundwork for Metro to construct a 13-mile public transit corridor through the Sepulveda Pass. Metro recently completed a feasibility study and community outreach on the project, which is intended to form the basis for a future environmental analysis and project refinements.

Metro is currently considering four design options, two of which include elevated tracks on Sepulveda Boulevard that run through residential neighborhoods, and many Sherman Oaks stakeholders have expressed concerns.

Community and City leaders are pushing for a fully-underground subway, because they see this as the best possible option for the Valley and Los Angeles. A fully-underground subway would be the fastest, least intrusive in residential and business communities, and serve the largest number of passengers.

With the understanding that this is one of the most important projects in Metro's history, your representatives are asking Metro to explore public-private partnerships to finance this project. It is critical that Metro gets this one right, and that the Valley gets the subway connections it deserves.

There is still plenty of time to get involved and make sure that Metro hears your opinion. You can send your comments to sepulvedatransit@metro.net or submit them via www.metro.net/projects/sepulvedacorridor.

You are also invited to contact your local Field Office deputy, Milene Minassians, at (818) 728 - 9924, or milene.minassians@lacity.org.
VIA EMAIL

September 17, 2019

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

Re: Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project
Sherman Oaks, CA

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Douglas Emmett is a long standing owner and a major stakeholder in Sherman Oaks and Encino with 12 commercial buildings totaling 3.5 million square feet, almost half of which is located at the intersection of Sepulveda and Ventura Boulevards. We understand Metro has been holding meetings to present the Valley-Westside refined concepts including HRT 1, HRT 2, HRT 3 and MRT 1 and strongly support Metro’s efforts to improve travel times between the Valley and the Westside.

As a developer and property owner, we appreciate the complications involved in constructing a major transit system and we value your commitment to community outreach and feedback. We support Metro’s continued evaluation of the environmental impacts of options HRT 1 and HRT 2. In fact, we strongly support HRT 2 as we believe transit stations should be walking distance from the most dense neighborhoods and HRT 2 puts a station immediately adjacent to 2 million sf of commercial space and within walking distance of a significant number of homes and apartment buildings. Conversely, we do not support further evaluation of HRT 3 and MRT 1 which both consist of above-ground rail systems that will horribly impact traffic flow and reduce the quality of life for both the commercial tenants and the residents of the Sherman Oaks community. We anticipate significant resistance to either of these options and therefore urge Metro to proceed with its evaluation of HRT 1 and HRT 2 so as to minimize disruption in the community.

We are available to meet at your convenience to discuss our comments above and look forward to future dialogue. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Jordan L. Kaplan
President & Chief Executive Officer
Douglas Emmett

cc: Councilmember David Ryu
Councilmember Paul Koretz
Councilmember Mike Bonin
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Mr. Jeff Kalban, Chair, Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council PLUM Committee
Kevin Crummy, CIO – Douglas Emmett
Michele Aronson, SVP – Douglas Emmett
September 16, 2019

Mr. Cory Zelmer
Program Manager, Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop 99-22-5
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Concern on the Future Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project

Dear Mr. Cory Zelmer,

I am writing you to express my concern for the future development of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project. IMT Residential is a Sherman Oaks, CA based privately held developer, manager and owner of multi-family residential communities. The company currently has over 20,000 residential units in seven U.S. states. Our corporate office is located at 15303 Ventura Boulevard in the Sherman Oaks Galleria, and my office overlooks Sepulveda Boulevard. As a major developer in the San Fernando Valley, IMT Residential has delivered or is in the process of delivering 745 apartment units on Sepulveda Boulevard.

1. 4410 Sepulveda – 31 units
2. 4827 Sepulveda – 325 units
3. 5700 Sepulveda – 131 units
4. 6500 Sepulveda – 160 units
5. 6940 Sepulveda – 98 units

My concern is for the more than 1,000 residents that live in our communities on Sepulveda Boulevard and 106 employees that work in our office on Sepulveda Boulevard. I urge the Metro Board to not select the unacceptable HRT 3 or MRT 1 elevated concepts. These concepts will impact our residents and employees with excessive noise, loss of privacy and increased traffic congestion on Sepulveda Boulevard, which is already an issue. I understand the need and support high quality public transportation in Los Angeles including Sherman Oaks and the San Fernando Valley, which is why I am supporting and urging the Metro Board to select heavy rail HRT 1 and HRT 2 subway concepts. Both of the fully underground concepts will provide high passenger capacity, fast and safe travel times with the least amount of impact to residents and commuters in Sherman Oaks, Van Nuys and Sepulveda Boulevard.

I support the efforts of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority as they seek the best, least impactful transit project to connect the San Fernando Valley to the Westside of Los Angeles.

Sincerely,

John M. Tesoriero
President/CEO
September 2, 2019

Objection to the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project
An open letter. (Via email and US Postal Service)

Dear Mr. Zelmer,

Homeowners of Encino (HOME) is one of the oldest and most significant Neighborhood Associations in the San Fernando Valley. We have a history of activism in support of keeping the San Fernando Valley a pleasant place to raise a family and work. We have a track record of winning disputes with many government agencies, including the mothballing of the 1992 plan to put an elevated subway over the 405 through the Sepulveda Pass.

Homeowners of Encino does not endorse, does not recommend, and will not support any of the proposed subway or monorail routes as discussed at your recent information meeting held on Saturday, August 3, 2019. We are not in the business of picking the least awful proposal. All these proposals are not alternatives to the 405 as they will not alleviate or mitigate the current or future traffic problems, in our studied opinion.

HOME asks that we put the fifth option on the table for extensive study. Home recommends a Freeway Tunnels under the 405 capable of alleviating some of the formidable car and truck traffic. Whatever the flaws of a freeway tunnel maybe it has one enormous advantage over a rail-line, the infrastructure exists. As we all know Los Angeles, and Southern California was developed with the car in mind. It is a foolhardy and expensive error to ever forget this and not using what previous generations have left us. We suggest a preliminary study considers a starting point somewhat north of the 101 Freeway and have it initially terminating at the 10 Freeway. Estimated at a $1 Billion a mile, a car tunnel could come in significantly cheaper.

Car tunnel benefits:

a. cheaper to build and maintain
b. can be converted to other uses latter — rail, etc.
c. needs no parking lots
d. could be tied to limits on new construction - demand
e. supported by drivers
f. less community opposition SOHA
g. learned lessons from the Boston Big Dig
h. compatible with existing travel mode - cars
i. flexibility - allows repurposing 405 lanes - toll, trucks, reverse lanes, etc.

First, construction of the rail-line or monorail “the line” will make things worse for years for all commuters, whether they are coming to the Valley or leaving the Valley. Construction will cause unnecessary delays, and disruptions to the flow of traffic. The huge and unfunded costs that will have to be borne by all taxpayers for minimal benefit at the end of the project. Of course, assuming the project ever gets completed. Homeowners of Encino is referring to the uncompensated social costs that never get computed into the actual cost of a project. Social costs are the costs of production or a project that are not born by the producer (Metro) or included in the price of the project. There are many classic examples: the pollution of air, water, and land from mining, fracking, oil drilling and pipeline spills, chemical fertilizer farming, GMOs, pesticides, radioactivity released from nuclear accidents, and the pollution of food by antibiotics and artificial hormones. Metros’ contribution to these uncompensated social costs, to name a few will be increased traffic, additional man-hours wasted in traffic (worth millions of dollars), which also harms the family unit, elevated pollution levels from burning fossil fuels from cars idling. The machinery to build your project, will also contribute to the pollution which you claim to dread. A rail line will cause the loss of valuable commodities – iron ore, petroleum, cement, copper, lumber, for no foreseeable gain. The Sepulveda Pass Rail line to almost nowhere will result in foreclosure of stores, warehouse and apartments to make way for Metro’s terminals and depots. (without sufficient parking). All of this without anyone being able to accurately predict whether the ridership of these proposed people movers will come to pass. I bring this up due to Metro’s propensity and demonstrated track record to lose both rail and bus ridership.

Traffic in Encino has grown worse each year in part to Metro’s shifting focus away from buses to rail. For residents of Encino to use the Orange Line they need to take a bus or a bike (an increasingly dangerous form of transportation) to a station. Encino also has very few options for getting from the Valley to the Westside, and even to Downtown LA. Any Construction on Sepulveda or Van Nuys Blvd will surely make things slower. Adding again to uncompensated actual and social costs. In the opinion of HOME, Metro has not considered either the first mile or last-mile or the parking problem. The rail lines are doomed to failure due to the proposed stations not being near enough to the Wilshire Corridor to help with anybody’s commute. Terminating and transferring at Exposition Blvd of dubious value.

Metro in HOME opinion is best known for recycling tax dollars. HOME would like to understand where the additional funds to complete these rail lines are coming from. Metro’s estimates believe they are going to at $13.5 Billion, giving us an estimated 2019 shortfall of $7 Billion. Given the inflationary outlook
for the price of raw materials compounding at a non-real-world rate of inflation of 3%\textsuperscript{1} it will take $17.5 Billion (at a minimum) to complete these projects in 2028. So where is the additional funding going to come? We do not believe what remains of the middle-class in this County can afford to bear any incremental tax increases. If Metro’s pursues this reckless entitlement due to the affirmative vote on measure M sales taxes or other levies will have to be increased further driving all manners of taxpayers out of the state and hollowing the people you are trying to serve. Possibly depriving Metro’s ability to carry out their mission of helping people move about the City and County.

Home also believes that these Rail-line ventures you propose are hypocritical. Due to the fact that Metro confesses to care about eliminating greenhouse gasses but policies actually cause a noticeable uptick in pollutants. \textbf{It is time Metro embraced the car and started studying what it can do to make our once world-class freeway system great again.}

In unanimity, the Board of Homeowners of Encino,

Eliot Cohen, President

\textsuperscript{1} Official Government Statistic are hedonically adjusted. ShadowStats.com shows that inflation calculated via the 1990 methodology (real-world inflation) is close to 6%.
August 21, 2019

Mr. Cory Zelmer
Program Manager, Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop 99-22-5
Los Angeles, CA 90012
zelmerc@metro.net

Subject: SOHA Recommendations and Comments on the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project

Reference 1: Letter, Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association to Cory Zelmer (Metro),
SOHA Comments and Questions on the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project – Revision 1,
July 23, 2018

Reference 2: Letter, Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association to Cory Zelmer (Metro),
SOHA Comments and Questions on the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Refined Concepts –
Revision 1, March 7, 2019

Dear Mr. Zelmer,

The Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association (SOHA) represents thousands of politically active families in a 70,000-person southeastern San Fernando Valley community that is home to about one-fourth of all potential routes for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project (see blue dashed lines on map at right). SOHA strongly supports effective and equitable high-capacity rapid transit in Sherman Oaks and the San Fernando Valley. We have been very involved in the project and submitted 41 comments on the project to Metro in Reference 1 and 39 comments in Reference 2.

On July 29th, SOHA conducted its own public meeting on the project. More than 225 residents attended to gain additional information and understanding on the project and its implications. We have additionally given 26 presentations to elected officials and community organizations. SOHA is very involved and wants to work with Metro to achieve the best possible project. We request that Metro participate with us soon in a joint meeting to discuss our recommendations, comments, and concerns.
Summary Recommendations

Based on reviews of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project and on comments received from community members, the SOHA submits three summary recommendations. Each is supported by multiple comments detailed later in this letter.

Recommendation 1 – At its December 2019 meeting, the Metro Board should select both of the great heavy rail HRT 1 and HRT 2 subway concepts for environmental analyses.

- Metro should select both HRT 1 and HRT 2 because they are fair and equitable to the Valley, and because they represent two diverse underground routes deserving of further environmental analysis. SOHA prefers the HRT 1 subway concept running under Van Nuys Boulevard because we feel it better aligns with the Sherman Oaks business community and future vision. [see Comment 1]
- Metro must explain to the public their plan to fully fund the HRT 1 and HRT 2 concepts – well before the December concept selection Board meeting. Metro has estimated HRT 1 costs at $13.5 billion ($2019) and HRT 2 at $13.8 billion. Yet Measure M sales tax receipts plus federal, state, county, local, and other funds provide only $6.5 billion ($2019). This huge funding shortfall deserves an explanation. [see Comment 2]
- Metro should add a large parking structure to Concept HRT 1 near the Van Nuys MetroLink Station. [see Comment 3]
- Metro should add a fourth station to HRT 2 near Sepulveda Boulevard and Sherman Way. HRT 2 currently has only three Valley stations and deserves a fourth. This station should include a large-capacity parking structure with easy 405 freeway access. [see Comment 4]
- Metro should conduct a comprehensive parking study for all potential HRT 1 and HRT 2 stations. Metro states that only two percent of its riders park at stations. This low percentage is probably due to a lack of parking at stations rather than riders not desiring to park at stations. [see Comment 5]

Recommendation 2 – At its December 2019 meeting, the Metro Board must not select either of the unacceptable HRT 3 or MRT 1 elevated concepts for environmental analyses.

- Metro must terminate work on concepts HRT 3 and MRT 1 because they are unfair and inequitable to Sherman Oaks, Van Nuys, and the entire San Fernando Valley. The elevated tracks impact more than 12,000 residents with excessive noise and loss of privacy. [see Comment 6]
- Metro has zero above-ground heavy rail in its entire transit system. Metro must consider elevated heavy rail or monorail tracks only on dedicated rights-of-way. The elevated track structures increase traffic congestion on Sepulveda Boulevard and much of the surrounding community. We cannot set a precedent for operating along or above our streets. [see Comment 7]
- Metro must not build elevated heavy rail or monorail track structures above the 96-inch high-pressure water main located under Sepulveda Boulevard. They will damage the water main and/or eliminate maintenance accessibility to it. The risks for delays and cost overruns are too great. [see Comment 8]
- Metro must stop considering an elevated heavy rail or monorail above Sepulveda Boulevard. The cost savings for the HRT 3 or MRT 1 elevated concepts compared to the HRT 1 subway concept is minimal – only 10 to 14 percent – and does not justify the Valley getting the short end of the stick again. [see Comment 9]

Recommendation 3 – Through its Predevelopment Agreement (PDA) process, the Metro Board should select one or more viable, affordable alternative concepts for environmental analyses.

- Metro must ensure a thorough, fair, and impartial evaluation of all alternative concepts proposed under the PDA process and select the most viable and affordable. [see Comment 10]
- SOHA supports a monorail operating above the 405 median and expects BYD SkyRail to propose this concept for a PDA, including the possible option of an underground section and station at the UCLA campus. This is a viable, affordable concept with strong community support. [see Comment 11]
Detailed Comments

In support of our three summary recommendations, we submit the following detailed comments.

Comment 1: Select Both HRT 1 and HRT 2 – SOHA strongly supports both the HRT 1 and HRT 2 subway concepts and recommends that the Metro Board select both to proceed into environmental analyses (see figure at right). Both are viable and equitable options for Sherman Oaks, Van Nuys, and the San Fernando Valley. Both are fully underground heavy rail with high passenger capacity, fast travel times, and fully underground stations. Both options give the Valley the fair share it deserves.

Of the two concepts, SOHA prefers HRT 1 under Van Nuys Boulevard. It has the straightest, shortest route from the Valley to the Westside, offers the fastest end-to-end travel time at 16 minutes, has two connections with the East SFV Transit Corridor Project, and potentially brings less disruption during construction.

HRT 1 and HRT 2 also offer sufficient diversity to the environmental analyses. HRT 1 travels under Van Nuys Boulevard, which is more commercially oriented. The concept can be a boon to Sherman Oaks business district and it also aligns well with our future vision for the community. HRT 2 travels under Sepulveda Boulevard with its mixed residential and commercial orientation. Its positive impacts may be slightly less because of its close proximity to the 405 freeway, which limits western access, although this proximity does provide potential better access for 405 commuters. All in all, the two concepts offer excellent environmental and operational diversity worthy of further clarification during environmental impact analyses. Metro can’t go wrong by selecting these two concepts for further study.

Comment 2: Explain Funding Plan – SOHA understands that projects are often somewhat initially underfunded but is concerned about the huge funding shortfall between committed Measure M funds and Metro’s estimated costs for the HRT 1 and HRT 2 concepts (and even the unacceptable and only somewhat less costly HRT 3 and MRT 1 concepts).

Measure M provides only $5.674 billion (in 2015 dollars) for Phase 2 of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project – from the Valley to the Westside. This is approximately $6.5 billion escalated to 2019 dollars. Of this $6.5 billion, $2.9 billion comes from Measure M sales tax revenue and $3.6 billion from federal, state, county, city, and other sources (probably including $1 billion from Measure R). Metro’s cost estimate for the HRT 1 heavy rail subway under Van Nuys Boulevard is $13.5 billion (in 2019 dollars) and $13.8 billion for the HRT 2 subway under Sepulveda Boulevard (see figure at right). The funding shortfall is at least $7 billion. This shortfall presents a scary situation to the public as it might indicate rapid transit may never be built or the transit concept may be downgraded. We have received many questions from our community members about this but have no answers to give them. We have even heard people say that the project will never be built, but we know that something will be built.

We recommend that Metro share their funding plans with the public in the next month or two. Any information will be better than the zero information now available, such as funding transfers possible within Measure M, additional funds outside of Measure M, or other sources that Metro is looking into. We will be glad to communicate the information widely.
Comment 3: Add HRT 1 Parking Structure at MetroLink Station – SOHA recommends that Metro look into the possibility of locating a major parking structure near the northern terminus of the HRT 1 subway route at Van Nuys Boulevard between Raymer Street and Sherman Way (see figure at right). We understand that the structure cannot have direct access to the 405 freeway, but its close proximity can help accommodate riders from the north and east Valley and other northern areas.

Comment 4: Add Fourth Valley HRT 2 Station with Parking Structure – SOHA strongly recommends that Metro add a fourth Valley station to the HRT 2 subway route. There is a considerable distance between the HRT 2 station at the Sepulveda Boulevard Orange Line station and the terminus at the Van Nuys Boulevard MetroLink station. The HRT 2 route is perfectly suited for an additional station and a major parking structure somewhere near Sepulveda Boulevard and Sherman Way (see figure at right). Metro recently added a fourth station at Santa Monica Boulevard to all Westside concepts. There are ample reasons to add an additional Valley station.

The station parking structure should accommodate at least 10,000 cars. We understand Metro’s concerns with the effectiveness and high cost of parking; but if Metro’s goal is removing drivers from the 405 and attracting drivers from the Valley and north county, then massive parking is simply mandatory. An easily accessible, multi-story parking structure, with rapid connections to both the freeway and station, can make that happen.

Comment 5: Conduct Comprehensive Parking Study – At Metro’s public meeting in early 2019, we were told that a comprehensive parking study was underway and would be reported at the next set of public meetings. As was apparent from multiple questions at Metro’s August 3rd Valley public meeting, parking at stations is a critical public concern and its presence or absence could make or break early ridership for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor. We have heard continuing comments from our community members about how they would love to ride Metro but are unable to find parking at stations. Yet, Metro provided little new information in its August 3rd presentation and nothing about a parking study. We did learn that only two percent of riders use “Park & Ride” and another two percent use “Kiss & Ride”. But we wonder if this is a chicken and egg problem. Could people not try to park at Metro stations because sufficient parking is not available? This question deserves an answer.

We recommend that Metro share further information on parking with the public in the next month or two – or better yet, conduct a comprehensive parking study and convey at least preliminary results to the public. For example, a broader distribution of parking sites across the Orange Line might provide for less station crowding and complement a large Valley parking structure on the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project. A carefully planned distributed parking solution might also help reduce congestion near Ventura Boulevard that squeezes southbound drivers into the dreaded “traffic funnel” in the area.
Comment 6: Terminate HRT 3 and MRT 1 Concepts – The HRT 3 and MRT 1 concepts are inequitable and unacceptable by being elevated in the Valley and should be immediately terminated from further consideration. The Valley and Westside were supposed to be equal partners in the project, sharing equal financial participation and equitable operational results. This will happen with the HRT 1 or HRT 2 concepts but cannot happen with HRT 3 or MRT 1.

The HRT 3 concept has heavy rail trains operating on elevated track structures 20 feet above street level for five miles from Valley Vista Boulevard in Sherman Oaks to Raymer Street in Van Nuys. The trains operate 45 feet in the air to cross over the 101 freeway and the Orange Line Busway overpass. This is not light rail like the Expo Line in Santa Monica or the Gold Line in Pasadena. This is large, noisy heavy rail trains that invade residents’ privacy and diminish their quality of life.

The MRT 1 concept has monorail trains operating on elevated track structures 20 feet above street level for five miles from Valley Vista Boulevard in Sherman Oaks to Raymer Street in Van Nuys. The trains operate 45 feet in the air to cross over the 101 freeway and the Orange Line Busway overpass. MRT 1 is also elevated through the Sepulveda Pass, operating on the west shoulder of the 405 from Valley Vista in Sherman Oaks to the Getty Museum (where it goes underground). Monorail is typically quieter than heavy rail, but still invades residents’ privacy.

There are 5,000 residential units and at least 12,000 Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys residents living within one-half mile of the elevated tracks (see light-red-shaded area on map at right). These residents and businesses will be subjected to noisy trains passing every four minutes. Multi-story apartment dwellers will experience loss of privacy as trains pass their second story windows. The HRT 3 and MRT 1 elevated concepts are unacceptable and Metro should stop considering them.

Comment 7: Build Elevated Tracks Only Above Dedicated Rights-of-Way – With elevated trains above our streets, Metro is trying to cram in something that does not belong here. The Expo Line in Culver City and Santa Monica is mostly street-level light rail, not elevated heavy rail. The Expo Line operates on a dedicated right-of-way, as does the Orange Line busway in the Valley. Metro currently has zero heavy rail anywhere in its system that is not subterranean. HRT 3 and MRT 1 set an unacceptable precedent of locating elevated track structures above already congested streets. These structures belong on dedicated rights-of-way, not above our streets where they further exacerbate traffic. Metro cannot set a precedent that could promulgate countywide.

Elevated track structures increase congestion in many ways. Large columns eliminate traffic lanes on Sepulveda – one of the most congested streets in the nation (see Metro HRT 3 rendering at right). The columns are spaced 100 to 120 feet apart. Since Ventura Boulevard is 120 feet crosswalk-to-crosswalk at Sepulveda, the columns are located in crosswalks and this eliminates left-turn lanes and impairs pedestrian access.
Locating elevated track structures on streets instead of dedicated rights-of-way also requires demolition of residences and businesses through eminent domain. Metro continues to claim that they have not yet studied the eminent domain impacts of their concepts. However, Metro’s own HRT 3 rendering at Sepulveda near Valley Vista Boulevards shows that more than 100 apartments and condominiums, a high-rise office building, a multi-story parking structure, a street, several small businesses, and another parking lot would be demolished to make way for the station (see figure at right). This is monstrous and unnecessary.

HRT 3 and MRT 1 with their elevated track structures are simply unacceptable for Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys – and other parts of the county as well. We cannot allow Metro to establish a precedent for using elevated heavy rail tracks above our streets, which will spread countywide. Metro must build elevated tracks only on dedicated rights-of-way such as freeways or prior rail routes.

Comment 8: Don’t Build Above Risky Water Main – There is a 2½-mile long old Metropolitan Water District 96-inch high-pressure water main under Sepulveda Boulevard in Sherman Oaks from Valley Vista Boulevard to Oxnard Street (see figure at right). This huge water main delivers water to the Westside and is seven times the size of the pipe that failed on Sunset Boulevard and flooded parts of the UCLA campus. The HRT 3 and MRT 1 elevated track structures can easily stress or damage the water main, even if they are not located directly above it. The track structures also cannot interfere with repair, maintenance or replacement of the water main after earthquakes or other emergencies.

Metro acknowledged the existence of this pipe in their first public meeting on the project but has not provided further information. We do not know if they have thoroughly studied the engineering and cost impacts of the water main on construction of the HRT 3 and MRT 1 elevated concept, and included these in their concept cost estimates. If not, the costs could substantially grow. We do know that it will be extremely difficult, costly, and risky to build elevated track structures anywhere above or near the water main. The risk is not worth the unacceptable result.

Comment 9: Don’t Make Unacceptable Selection for Minimal Cost Savings – Metro estimates that their HRT 1 and HRT 2 fully underground subway concepts cost $13.5 and $13.8 billion, respectively. They estimate that their HRT 3 and MRT 1 concepts elevated above Sepulveda Boulevard cost $12.2 and $11.6 billion, respectively. This means that the elevated concepts cost only 10 to 14 percent less than the fully underground HRT 1 subway concept (see figure at right). The cost savings might be even less if Metro has not yet taken the cost of building above the water main into account. A 10 to 14 percent savings is minimal, essentially not worth talking about, and is probably well below the uncertainty of Metro’s cost estimates. It would be worse than foolish to let a minimal cost savings drive the concept selection decision for Metro’s most important transit infrastructure project that will still be operating in 100+ years. The HRT 3 and MRT 1 concepts are not worth considering and are simply unacceptable. They should be terminated immediately.
**Comment 10: Ensure Fair Evaluation of Alternative Concepts** – We are pleased that the Metro Board authorized their Predevelopment Agreement (PDA) process at the July 2019 board meeting. This can lead to Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for viable and more affordable alternative concepts. SOHA is concerned that the evaluation of alternative concepts be conducted in a fair, equitable, and unbiased manner. Our concern arises because we have heard conflicting Metro opinions about one possible alternative concept – a monorail running above the 405 median.

On President’s Day 2019, Bob Anderson of the Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association and Jeff Kalban of the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council decided that Metro’s MRT 1 monorail concept might be more viable operating above the 405 freeway median than above Sepulveda Boulevard. They put together a potential concept that followed the 405 freeway from the Valley to Westside to LAX and began presenting this concept to elected officials and community organizations.

On March 18th, they presented the concept to Metro’s Dave Mieger, Cory Zelmer, Peter Carter, and Karen Swift from the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project. At this presentation, they were clearly told that the concept was impossible because it could not fit into the 405 median after Metro added additional toll lanes promised as part of Measure M. They then presented the concept to Metro’s Chief Innovation Officer, Joshua Schank on March 29, 2019. At this presentation, they were clearly told that locating a monorail above the 405 median was certainly possible. At the recent Metro Valley public meeting on August 3rd, Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Deputy Program Manager, Peter Carter stated that locating a monorail above the 405 median was definitely possible from the 10 to 101 freeways, but not possible north of the 101 freeway based on reasons that are not altogether convincing. There appears to be some differences of opinion and possible preconceived biases within the Metro staff.

We strongly recommend that Metro establish a panel of experts from inside and outside Metro to evaluate proposed PDAs. This ensures the public that there are no preconceived biases in the evaluation process and results in the most viable alternatives being selected for environmental analyses.

**Comment 11: Strongly Consider Community-Supported 405 Monorail Alternative** – In March 2019, we learned that BYD SkyRail has been working on a 405 monorail concept for almost two years and plans to bid this concept to Metro as an alternative under the PDA process. SOHA is convinced that the 405 monorail concept offers a potential viable alternative concept for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project (see figures at right and below). A 405 monorail appears to have equal capacity and similar travel times to heavy rail subways while being more affordable and quicker to build. For example, monorail construction technology uses pre-cast beams and columns, which may provide a shorter schedule with fewer construction impacts. And it would run on a dedicated right-of-way – the 405 freeway median.

SOHA presented the 405 monorail concept to more than 380 elected officials and community members. We can say without a doubt that public response to this concept is overwhelmingly supportive. At Metro’s August 3rd Valley public meeting, the concept was mentioned in a Q&A question and received a spontaneous roar of approval from the audience.

We are not advocating that Metro select this 405 monorail concept, but only that they fairly evaluate it and, if determined viable, select the concept to proceed into environmental analyses with the selected Metro concepts – hopefully HRT 1 and HRT 2.
Thank you. We reiterate our request that Metro participate with us soon in a joint meeting to discuss our recommendations, comments, and concerns. We all need to work together to make this the best project in the county.

If you have questions or would like to discuss our comments, please contact Bob Anderson at BobHillsideOrdinance@roadrunner.com or (213) 364-7470.

Sincerely,

Bob Anderson, MS, PE (NU 474)  
Chair, Transportation Committee  
Board Member  
Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association

Marshall Long, PhD, PE (M 18759)  
Chair, Planning and Land Use Committee  
Board Member  
Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association

cc: Phil Washington (CEO, Metro), Nadine Lee (COS, Metro), Joshua Schank (CIO, Metro), Peter Carter (Metro), Dave Mieger (Metro), Karen Swift (Metro), Frank Ching (Metro), Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Emailbox (Metro), Mayor Eric Garcetti (Mayor, City of Los Angeles and Vice Chair, Metro Board), Julia Salinas (Mayor’s office), Tanaz Golshan (Mayor’s office), Councilmember David Ryu (CD4), Nick Greif (CD4 office), Renee Weitzer (CD4 office), Adeena Bleich (CD4 office), Justin Orenstein (CD4 office), Milene Minassians (CD4 office), Councilmember Paul Krekorian (CD2 and Metro Board member), Karo Torossian (CD2 office), Doug Mensman (CD2 office), Councilmember Bob Blumenfield (CD3), Lisa Hansen (CD3 office), John Popoch (CD3 office), Jeff Jacobberger (CD3 office), Councilmember Paul Koretz (CD5), Joan Pelico (CD5 office), Jay Greenstein (CD5 office), Jeffrey Ebenstein (CD5 office), Councilmember Nury Martinez (CD6), Ackley Padilla (CD6 office), Arcelia Arce (CD6 office), Yvonne Perez (CD6 office), Councilmember Monica Rodriguez (CD7), Doug Tripp (CD7 office), Council President Herb Wesson Jr (CD10), Andrew Westall (CD10 office), Councilmember Mike Bonin (CD11 and Metro Board member), Paul Backstrom (CD11 office), Senator Bob Hertzberg (18th District), Raj Dhillon (18th District office), Barri Worth Girvan (18th District office), Hannah Kelley (18th District office), Assemblyman Adrin Nazarian (46th District), Emma Taylor (46th District office), Brian Stedge (46th District office), Congressman Brad Sherman (30th District), John Alford (30th District office), Supervisor Hilda Solis (1st District and 2nd Vice Chair, Metro Board), Mark Ridley-Thomas (2nd District and Metro Board), Supervisor Sheila Kuehl (3rd District and Metro Board member), Nicole Englund (3rd District office), Benita Trujillo (3rd District office), Supervisor Janice Hahn (4th District and Metro Board member), Supervisor Kathryn Barger (5th District and Metro Board member), Dave Perry (5th District office), Mayor James Butts (Mayor, City of Inglewood and Chair, Metro Board), Mayor Ara Najarian (Mayor, City of Glendale and Metro Board Member), Jeffrey Hartsough (SONC), Avo Babian (SONC), Jeff Kalban (SONC), Leslie Elkan (Village at Sherman Oaks BID), Tammy Scher (Sherman Oaks Chamber), David Phelps (Sherman Oaks Chamber), Glenn Epstein (VNNC), Steve Friedmann (VNNC), Alex Garay (ENC), Robin Greenberg (BABCNC), Irene Sandler (BABCNC), Larry Leisten (BABCNC), Gerald Silver (HOE), Eliot Cohen (HOE), John Bwarie (SFFC), Coby King (VICA), Stuart Waldman (VICA), Marian Dodge (Hillside Federation), John Khamneipur (Sherman Oaks Galleria), Robert Silverstein Esq., Ariella Plachta (LA Daily News), Laura Nelson (LA Times)
April 11, 2019

Cory Zelmer, Project Manager, Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project
LA Metro
One Gateway Plaza, M/S 99-22-5
Los Angeles, CA 90012
zelmerc@metro.net
sepulvedatransit@metro.net

RE: Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project – Comments Regarding The Westside-LAX Initial Concepts & The Valley-Westside Initial Concepts Relating To Westside Issues

Dear Mr. Zelmer:

The Westside Neighborhood Council (WNC) reviewed and considered the Initial Concepts for both the Valley-Westside Initial Concepts as they relate to and impact the Westside and the Westside-LAX Initial Concepts at its March 14, 2019 meeting. This letter outlines comments, concerns and recommendations of the 2 initial concepts for both portions of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project based upon the information available up to this point in the evaluation. We anticipate having further comments based upon the selection of alternatives, environmental analysis and all remaining steps in the process.

First, the WNC is concerned that any decisions that are made regarding the Valley-Westside Segment of the project that are done in advance of any decisions regarding the Westside-LAX segment of the project could adversely affect the Westside. Too often decisions seemed to be based upon financial considerations rather than good planning and vision for the long-term as was evidenced by the long term consequences of decisions made regarding the Expo Corridor project that did not have grade separation at two important grade crossings in the WNC boundaries. Stakeholders whether they be residents, businesses, or visitors are impacted permanently by the substantial impact to traffic and circulation in our area as a result of this shortsighted decision. It has substantially increased gridlock on our commercial corridors during am and pm peak periods and it has created extensive invasive cut-through traffic in our neighborhoods. It has impacted business for our retail and restaurant uses. It has added noise, light, and privacy impacts as well as increased crime to our neighborhoods. Please do not make the same short sighted poor decisions with this project.

We are aware that the Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association (SOHA) has requested enhancements to the Valley to LAX segment. We are deeply concerned by their comments about their perceived inequity regarding underground versus at-grade or aerial rail mileage. Decisions should not be based upon whether there is an exact equivalency of mileage above ground and below ground in comparing the two project...
segments but rather the best project alternatives and design for each of the segments and not one at the expense of the other. We do not object to their preferences and recommendations for areas in the valley but not if that impacts decisions made on our side of the Santa Monica Mountains and at our expense. They have not suffered the consequences of the impacts from the Expo Light Rail and we cannot afford their opinion about “equitable partnerships” to further impact our already bad situation with new even worse impacts from poor choices on this new project. If it necessitates requesting and approving additional Measure M or other funding sources to construct the best project with the fewest impacts than that is what must happen.

Although we are generally not going to comment further on the recommendations and comments that SOHA made on this project in their February 5, 2019 letter, we do agree that consolidating a needed maintenance facility with the existing facilities at the existing East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor project makes the most sense and is a suitable facility.

The WNC supports the use of heavy rail for the Valley-Westside Transit through the Sepulveda Pass and continuing into the Westside to LAX Segment. The WNC supports Metro’s decision not to consider light rail further because of its impacts to both residents and businesses (traffic, circulation, noise, parking, light, emergency vehicle access, aesthetics, etc.). Additionally, the WNC does not support the use of the Monorail alternative as it has many of the same impacts as light rail. The WNC supports the use of heavy rail for the Valley-Westside Transit through the Sepulveda Pass and continuing into the Westside to LAX segment of the project. This would apply in either the Sepulveda/I-405 concept or in the Sepulveda/Centinela concept.

Monorail would impact existing residences and businesses along and adjacent to the Sepulveda Corridor as well as the Westside generally. The use of Monorail instead of Heavy Rail could result in reduced or narrowed vehicular travel lanes with the associated vehicular traffic and safety impacts, impacts to sidewalks and ADA accessibility issues, elimination of needed and code required parking for businesses along the Sepulveda Boulevard corridor that are already constrained by the existing conditions (particularly between Santa Monica and National Boulevards), Sepulveda Boulevard is scheduled to have a bicycle lane added as a result of the Expo Corridor Project which will already impact vehicular travel lanes north and south on one of the most impacted corridors in the City of Los Angeles.

Sepulveda Boulevard is also the Caltrans emergency alternative to the I-405 freeway. Certainly the importance of this street for alternative vehicle access to the I-405 Freeway in addition to its role as a commercial corridor is exemplified by the collapse of a portion of the I-10 during the Northridge earthquake and the impacts that had on regional transportation until it was repaired.

Construction activities and impacts are of great concern generally. Sufficient staging and lay down areas for equipment and vehicles must be planned for and located in areas that have the least possible impact on residences and businesses in our area.

The WNC will provide further comments regarding construction and construction staging, parking, tunneling, environmental and other issues once greater detail is available regarding the Westside to LAX Segment.
Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

*Terri Tippit*

Terri Tippit, Chair  
Westside Neighborhood Council

Cc: Councilman Paul Koretz, CD5 (paul.koretz@lacity.org)  
   Hagu Solomon-Cary, Planning Deputy CD5 (hagu.solomon-cary@lacity.org)
April 8, 2019

To Whom it may concern at Metro:

The Village at Sherman Oaks Business Improvement District board of directors prefers the concept designated as MRT 2. We recommend the only above grade acceptable option to study is MRT 2; to have the monorail run from the northern terminus at Van Nuys Metrolink down the center of the 405 freeway to LAX. We will not accept any transit solution that puts trains or monorails on or above the streets of Sherman Oaks and therefore support the concept of a monorail down the center of the 405.

Respectfully,

Leslie Elkan
President
Village at Sherman Oaks BID

14930 Ventura Blvd. #210
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403
818-326-0273
SOHA submits Revision 1 to our original February 5, 2019 comment letter. We revised 10 of our original comments (changes highlighted in red), added 6 new comments numbered 34 to 39, and provided Attachment A discussing an alternative MRT 2 monorail concept. We assigned new comments to appropriate sections, so they will appear out of numerical order.

Thank you.

March 7, 2019 – Revision 1

Mr. Cory Zelmer
Program Manager, Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project
LA Metro
One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop 99-22-5
Los Angeles, CA 90012
zelmerc@metro.net

Subject: SOHA Comments and Questions on the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Refined Concepts

Reference: LA Metro, Next Stop: Exploring Alternatives to the 405 – Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project, Community Meetings Presentation, January/February 2019

Dear Mr. Zelmer,

The Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association represents thousands of politically active families in a 70,000-person southeastern San Fernando Valley community that is home to much of the northern Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Study Area (see map). SOHA strongly supports effective high-capacity rapid transit in Sherman Oaks and the San Fernando Valley. Our mission is ensuring that Valley gets its fair share of this rapid transit. And because Sherman Oaks will experience much of the project’s construction impacts, a further goal is ensuring that these impacts are carefully considered and thoughtfully mitigated.

SOHA reviewed Metro’s referenced Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project presentation charts and participated in the February 2nd public meeting. We appreciate the depth and breadth of information that Metro presented, especially at this mid-stage of the Project Feasibility Study. We further appreciate the additional transparency of Metro having provided presentation materials before the meetings. SOHA feels that the four refined concepts were carefully selected and applaud Metro for eliminating the underperforming light rail options and cleverly extending the project’s northern terminus to the Van Nuys Metrolink station for improved ridership.

We submit the following 39 comments and questions concerning the project and may submit further questions or revise our comments prior to the summer 2019 public meetings.
Underground Versus Aerial Alignment

1. [Revised] SOHA understands Metro’s continued evaluation of two fully underground heavy rail concepts (HRT 1 and HRT 2), one partially aerial heavy rail concept (HRT 3), and one partially aerial monorail concept (MRT 1) to fully understand their viability and, most importantly, to accurately estimate their costs. We also understand that HRT 1 and HRT 2 will cost much more than HRT 3 which will cost more than MRT 1 – fully underground will cost much more than partially aerial.

SOHA is concerned that none of the concepts may be affordable under only Measure M funding. A March 5th ConstructionDive article noted that Metro approved a $3.2 billion budget for the 2.6-mile Westside Purple Line Extension project – a cost of more than $1.2 billion per mile. A recent CityWatch article noted that Purple Line construction costs are approaching $1 billion per mile. At Metro’s February 2nd public meeting, one Metro staff member noted that the fully underground Sepulveda Transit Corridor concepts could cost $11 billion. These escalating figures are troubling.

The HRT 1 and HRT 2 concepts are each about 15 miles long. Based on the latest cost trends noted above for fully underground heavy rail, it’s easy to guesstimate that HRT 1 and HRT 2 construction will cost $10 to $15 billion. Measure M provides about $6.5 billion for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project (escalated by 3.4 percent per year to 2019 dollars) – at least a $3.5 billion shortfall. The 28x28 Olympics Initiative may provide up to $8.6 billion – at least a $1.4 billion shortfall. Importantly, 55 percent of Metro’s Measure M money is from federal, state, local, and other funding – and who knows the availability of that funding. Metro must select the best concept for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project and find the necessary additional funding sources, including public-private partnerships if necessary, to construct that concept. It would be worse than foolish to let funding drive concept selection decisions for a transit infrastructure project that will still be operating in 100+ years. It would be even worse to not acknowledge that none of Metro’s four concepts may be affordable.

As we have stated many times, SOHA will strongly oppose any concept that is not fully underground in Sherman Oaks. We are home to one of the nation’s most congested intersections – Sepulveda Boulevard at Ventura Boulevard – and want nothing at grade or aerial that worsens our congestion. On the other hand, we cannot simply complain and demand – we have to help. To this end, SOHA commits to support Metro in any way necessary to secure the additional funding needed to make the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project fully underground in our community, the Valley, and the Westside. We have already put on our thinking caps, begun talking with our allies, and started engaging with political leaders and community members. We all want and need a win-win solution for this critical rapid transit project.

The fully underground heavy rail HRT 1 and HRT 2 concepts may prove unaffordable. The partially underground heavy rail HRT 3 concept may also prove unaffordable. The partially underground monorail MRT 1 concept is lowest cost but not equitable – and may also be unaffordable? SOHA offers a solution – the MRT 2 monorail concept above the I-405 median (see comment 34).
2. SOHA is very concerned that neither the HRT 3 or MRT 1 aerial concepts would provide an equitable and fair share of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project for the Valley – because the Valley gets all or most of the aerial routes while the Westside gets all or most of the underground routes. This was not what Metro promoted and not what the Valley was promised.

Measure M, Attachment A, Los Angeles County Transit Expenditure Plan – Groundbreaking Sequence provides Metro’s specific funding allocations and cost estimates (in 2015 dollars) by project and subregion. The San Fernando Valley portion of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project (north of Mulholland Drive) is allocated $1.270 billion from Measure M funding and $1.567 billion from local, state, federal, and other funding, and the estimated Valley project cost is $2.837 billion. The Westside portion of the project has the exact same funding and exact same cost. So, the Valley and Westside subregions appear to be equal partners sharing equal financial participation in the project.

The Valley and Westside subregions also equally share the project’s route and stations. The route lengths are about 14.5 for HRT 3 and 15 miles for MRT 3, split very equally between the Valley and Westside subregions. In addition, the number of stations in each subregion is about the same – four in the Valley and three in the Westside. The Valley and Westside appear to be equal partners sharing equal route, station, and financial participation in the project.

Unfortunately, the partnership falters when considering how the Valley and Westside share the aerial portions of either the HRT 3 or MRT 1 routes. Why? Because for both aerial concepts the Valley is saddled with all or most of the aerial routes. This is not equitable and certainly not a fair share!

The 14.5-mile HRT 3 concept route has about 7 miles in the Valley (north of Mulholland) and 7.5 miles in the Westside (south of Mulholland). The Valley has about 1.3 miles of underground route and 5.7 miles of aerial route (elevated above ground) – or 20 percent underground route and 80 percent aerial route. The Westside has 100 percent underground route and zero percent aerial route. SOHA cannot understand why Metro would promote such inequity between two equal-partner subregions by proposing primarily aerial routes only in the Valley. The Valley and Westside equitably share the funding. Shouldn’t they also equitably split the negative impacts of the aerial routes?

A similar inequity exists for the monorail concept – and is even worse for the Valley. The 15-mile MRT 1 route has 7 miles in the Valley (north of Mulholland) and 8 miles on the Westside (south of Mulholland). The entire Valley 7-mile route is at-grade or aerial – zero percent underground and 100 percent at-grade or aerial. The Westside has about 5.6 miles of underground route and 2.4 miles of at-grade or aerial route – or about 70 percent underground and 30 percent at-grade or aerial.

SOHA expects Metro to recognize and correct this inequitable aerial routing early in the Project Feasibility Study’s final phase. A simple and viable solution is equally allocating at-grade and aerial routes for the HRT 3 and MRT 1 concepts between the Valley and the Westside. We discuss one possible solution for each concept and note that there are many other solutions.

For the HRT 3 concept, the heavy rail route currently transitions from underground to aerial near Sepulveda and Valley Vista Boulevards. Metro could extend the underground route by instead transitioning to aerial at the Orange Line station. The Valley segment would then be about 3.5 miles underground and 3.5 miles aerial – or 50 percent underground and 50 percent aerial.
In parallel, Metro could modify the Westside HRT 3 route to match this 50-50 split. Relocating and converting the Westside underground route to aerial from the Sunset Boulevard station south to the Expo Line station (see figure at right) would result in about 4.5 miles underground and 3 miles aerial. This is about 60 percent underground and 40 percent aerial on the Westside – near enough to the Valley’s 50-50 split to be almost equitable.

For the MRT 1 concept, Metro could add a considerable length of underground route in the Valley between Valley Vista Boulevard and the Sherman Oaks station on Sepulveda Boulevard. This would result in about 3.5 miles of underground route through the most congested portion of Sherman Oaks – or 50 percent underground and 50 percent at-grade or aerial for the Valley. Relocating and converting the Westside underground route to aerial from the Sunset Boulevard station south to the Expo Line station (see figure at right) would result in about 5 miles underground and 3 miles aerial. This is a bit more than 60 percent underground and a bit less than 40 percent aerial – another almost equitable split for the Valley.

Such modifications are equitable and fair solutions to restore the Valley-Westside partnership. SOHA understands that the solutions are substantial and significant but are also critical to provide the Valley its fair share of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project. We are already discussing these potential solutions with our elected officials and the San Fernando Valley Council of Governments and would also like to discuss them with Metro as soon as possible.

**HRT 1 Concept – Heavy Rail Under Van Nuys Boulevard**

3. [Revised] Concept HRT 1 is most likely SOHA’s preferred concept because it is fully underground, provides necessary excess capacity, has the straightest, shortest route from the Valley to Westside, offers the fastest end-to-end travel time of 15 minutes, and potentially brings less disruption during the years-long construction period. It is also one of the two most costly concepts and will probably require additional funding beyond Measure M. SOHA shares Metro’s concern about tunneling under the southernmost stations of the new East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor but feels this is solvable.

SOHA urges Metro to look into the possibility of locating a major parking structure near the northern terminus of the HRT 1 route, somewhere between Raymer Street and Sherman Way. The structure should have easy access to the I-405 freeway to help accommodate riders from the north Valley and other northern areas.

We also urge Metro to think about combining the Sepulveda and East SFV Corridors between the Orange Line and Van Nuys Metrolink station, but we understand that this is a difficult problem because one corridor supports regional travelers and the other local travelers. Still, it is worth looking into even though the ESFVTC EIR is complete and approved.

Concept HRT 1 also requires a significant amount of utility work under Sepulveda Boulevard, and could provide the LADWP an opportunity to underground all utilities that run above Sepulveda Boulevard. This would help fulfill Metro’s goal of making transit stations walkable and providing good connections to other transit. In addition to being unsightly, overhead utility lines prevent the planting of shade trees, which would make Sepulveda Boulevard more walkable. We hope that LADWP might consider undergrounding and Metro consider tree-scaping for the public good.
HRT 2 Concept – Heavy Rail Under Sepulveda Boulevard

4. [Revised] Concept HRT 2 is SOHA’s close second to HRT 1 because it is fully underground, has the second shortest route, and offers a comparably fast 16-minute travel time. It is also one of the two most costly concepts and will probably require additional funding beyond Measure M. SOHA’s major concerns with HRT 2 are construction impacts and their effective mitigation, which will be very difficult and costly because Sepulveda Boulevard has the worst traffic in the nation and offers minimal alternate traffic routes toward the west.

We have further concerns about public perceptions against tunneling under a residential community and any resultant operational noise and vibration from heavy rail trains. Metro initially addressed these concerns at their recent public meetings but should provide additional information and proof at the summer 2019 meetings.

The HRT 2 route is close to Metro’s possible major parking structure location near Sherman Way at Sepulveda Boulevard. Such parking is critical for drivers from the north and the location offers a close connection to the I-405 freeway.

Concept HRT 2 also requires a significant amount of utility work under Sepulveda Boulevard, and could provide the LADWP an opportunity to underground all utilities that run above Sepulveda Boulevard. This would help fulfill Metro’s goal of making transit stations walkable and providing good connections to other transit. In addition to being unsightly, overhead utility lines prevent the planting of shade trees, which would make Sepulveda Boulevard more walkable. We hope that LADWP might consider undergrounding and Metro consider tree-scaping for the public good.

HRT 3 Concept – Heavy Rail Aerial Above Sepulveda Boulevard

5. [Revised] Concept HRT 3 is not desirable or viable as currently configured because it has a fully aerial route in Sherman Oaks and does not equitably share aerial routing with the Westside (see comment 2). HRT 3 is heavy rail with excess capacity and does offer a reasonable 18-minute travel time. Construction impacts may be somewhat less than those for concept HRT 2 but will still be significant. The concept is most likely the second least costly and its quality of performance reflects that lower cost.

The aerial route will be intrusive and will interfere with traffic. It will probably also be noisy. In addition, using a 35-foot-high elevated overpass to cross heavy rail trains above the I-101 freeway and elevated Orange Line busway is not sensible, potentially unsafe from trains derailing during seismic events, and not sensitive to aesthetics or our residents. The concept will require purchase or condemnation of substantial amounts of private residential property. The aerial track and support structures will be located in single-family Sherman Oaks neighborhoods. We are also very concerned about the loss of parking along Sepulveda Boulevard – and also about possible lost traffic lanes.

We appreciate the additional station at Sherman Way and the proximity to a major parking structure near that station and the I-405.
MRT 1 Concept – Monorail At or Above Grade Through the Sepulveda Pass and Aerial Above Sepulveda Boulevard

6. [Revised] Concept MRT 1 is not desirable or viable as currently configured because it has a fully aerial route in Sherman Oaks and does not equitably share aerial routing with the Westside (see comment 2). MRT 1 employs slow rubber-tired monorail trains or trams with significantly lower capacity and the longest 26-minute travel time. It also adds yet another type of Metro transit technology, which tends to make maintenance more complex and more expensive, especially if this project is the only one using monorail technology. Construction impacts may be somewhat less than those for concept HRT 2 but will still be significant because there will be two monorail tracks – one in each direction – unlike the single-direction Disneyland track.

The aerial route will be intrusive and interfere with traffic. Using a 35-foot-high elevated overpass to cross monorail trains above the I-101 freeway and elevated Orange Line busway is not sensible, potentially unsafe from trains derailing during seismic events, and not sensitive to aesthetics or our residents. The concept will require purchase or condemnation of substantial amounts of private residential property. The aerial track and support structures will be located in single-family Sherman Oaks neighborhoods. We are also very concerned about the loss of parking along Sepulveda Boulevard – and also about possible lost traffic lanes.

We appreciate the additional station at Sherman Way and the proximity to a major parking structure near that station and the I-405. MRT 1 might also offer possible additional stations in the Sepulveda Pass, but these would further increase the already long travel time.

34. [New Comment] We are concerned that lack of sufficient funding could force Metro to select the least costly MRT 1 monorail concept – which SOHA considers unequitable for the Valley and not viable. In fact, we are further concerned that MRT 1 – with its Westside underground sections – may also prove unaffordable for Metro. We need an equitable, viable, and lower-cost solution.

To this end, SOHA worked with other Sherman Oaks community members and organizations to develop an alternative monorail concept that we call MRT 2. The MRT 2 concept operates above the I-405 freeway median – from the Van Nuys Metrolink station to LAX. As shown in the figure at the right, MRT 2 has the same number of stations as MRT 1, in approximately the same locations. The concept has no underground sections and should therefore have significantly lower construction costs and much improved affordability. It should also be quicker to build. How about completion of the entire line by the 2028 Olympics? We provide significant detail in Attachment A.

35. [New Comment] We recommend that Metro carefully analyze the operational impacts of monorail operation up and down the steep slopes of the Sepulveda Pass on maintenance requirements and costs for the concept – and on the risks of failures during operation. Loads are much higher dealing with that mass and momentum gravity influences. No one wants to read about the monorail being condemned and mothballed after 20 years because of faulty operation.
Concept Evaluation

7. Chart 10 from Metro’s referenced presentation highlights the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project’s evaluation criteria. SOHA is concerned that the criteria do not specifically include construction impacts and construction mitigation impacts as these will be very significant in Sherman Oaks, will begin in the early 2020s, and will last for many years. Metro must provide additional details when and how these concerns will be included in the project evaluation at the summer 2019 public meetings. We understand that they will be fully addressed in the Environmental Impact Report, but this may occur too late to impact the evaluation and selection process.

System Ridership and Capacity

8. We appreciate that Metro conducted passenger demand analyses and determined that each of the four concepts can provide at least 100,000 daily project trips. We await the results of future capacity and ridership analyses to better predict the actual operating capabilities for each of the concepts and hope this information will be available to the public before the next summer 2019 public meetings. It is very important to help the public understand the capabilities of the various concepts.

9. Could Metro please clarify whether their 412,000-traveler aggregate number includes only I-405 travelers, or also includes travelers on Sepulveda Boulevard and other Sherman Oaks streets that feed the Westside (such as Woodcliff Road, Scadlock Lane, and Beverly Glen Boulevard)?

Aerial Routes

10. [Revised] The HRT 3 heavy rail concept uses aerial routes from Valley Vista and Sepulveda Boulevards to the Van Nuys Metrolink station, including overpasses above the I-101 freeway and elevated Orange Line busway that would be at least 35 feet high. Metro must perform early light and shadow studies to determine the environmental and community impacts from the aerial tracks and their supporting structures (see figure at right) and present the results at the summer 2019 public meetings.

Metro must also provide at least the following artist renderings for the HRT 3 concept at the summer 2019 public meetings so the public can easily visualize and understand the negative impacts on the Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys communities: (1) Valley Vista transition from underground to aerial route; (2) Sepulveda and Ventura Boulevards intersection; (3) Ventura Boulevard station; (4) overpass crossing above the I-101 freeway; (5) Sepulveda and Burbank Boulevards intersection; (6) Orange Line overpass and station; (7) Sherman Way station; (8) Sherman Way parking structure; (9) route turn from Sepulveda Boulevard onto Raymer Street; (10) Van Nuys Metrolink station; and (11) any other significant features, turns, or underground-to-aerial transitions along the route.
11. [Revised] The MRT 1 monorail concept uses aerial routes from the Getty Center to the Van Nuys Metrolink station. The concept includes at-grade or aerial monorail running along the west shoulder of the I-405 freeway, two monorail crossovers of the I-405 freeway, aerial monorail tracks along Sepulveda Boulevard, and overpasses above the I-101 freeway and elevated Orange Line busway that would be at least 35 feet high. Metro must perform early light and shadow studies to determine the environmental and community impacts from the aerial tracks and their supporting structures (see figure at right) and present the results at the summer 2019 public meetings.

Metro must also provide at least the following artist renderings for the MRT 1 concept at the summer 2019 public meetings so the public can easily visualize and understand the negative impacts on the Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys communities: (1) the Getty Center transition from underground to aerial route; (2) both overpass crossings above the I-405 freeway; (3) multiple views of operation at-grade or aerial along the I-405 freeway shoulder; (4) the transition to aerial on Sepulveda Boulevard; (5) Sepulveda and Ventura Boulevards intersection; (6) Ventura Boulevard station; (7) overpass crossing above the I-101 freeway; (8) Sepulveda and Burbank Boulevards intersection; (9) Orange Line overpass and station; (10) Sherman Way station; (11) Sherman Way parking structure; (12) route turn from Sepulveda Boulevard onto Raymer Street; (13) Van Nuys Metrolink station; and (14) any other significant features, turns, or underground-to-aerial transitions along the route.

Public-Private Partnership

12. For several years, Metro has continued mentioning the possibility of a public-private partnership for construction of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project. Metro has not yet provided any information, either speculative or definitive, about such a possibility. It is getting late in the Technical Feasibility Study and project evaluation cycles, and SOHA wonders how much longer Metro plans to pursue a PPP opportunity. Metro should present substantive information on the possibility and status of a public-private partnership at the summer 2019 public meetings.

Construction Cost and Schedule

13. [Revised] SOHA understands that Metro’s cost estimates will be critical in selecting the final concepts going forward. The cost estimates must be thorough and complete. Construction on either Sepulveda or Van Nuys Boulevards will be devilishly difficult, incurring major traffic challenges. In addition, construction may occur along the entirety of Sepulveda or Van Nuys Boulevards due to required replacement of water lines (blue line on figure) and storm drains (purple lines on figure). Any re-routing of traffic will be almost impossible – the traffic levels are simply too great and the alternate routes too few. Drivers will be late, angry, and even dangerous. We recommend that Metro’s cost estimates include significant costs for construction mitigation, traffic mitigation, and especially on-site traffic control wardens during all construction hours and probably all hours (the City of Los Angeles should not be expected to pay for these wardens and probably won’t anyhow). These costs will be significant and could impact concept evaluation and selection.
14. The two concepts using aerial routes – HRT 3 and MRT 1 – may be built more quickly because there will be less tunneling and fewer underground stations. This in turn may enable a shorter construction schedule – possible short enough to meet the 2028 Olympics schedule – although we have our doubts. SOHA’s position is that this quicker schedule is irrelevant in the big picture for an infrastructure project that passengers will still be riding in 100+ years. Yes, it would be nice to have this transit corridor operational for the Olympics. But the Olympics is a one-time event and insignificant compared to selecting and constructing the best, highest-capacity, most-efficient transit system through the Sepulveda Pass. We urge Metro to build the best project as fast as possible without succumbing to the Olympics illusion.

36. [New Comment] Monorail construction technology uses narrow, pre-cast beams and columns, which may provide a shorter schedule with fewer construction impacts. We have read several articles claiming that a Valley-to-LAX system could be built in less than four years. This estimate may be a bit optimistic, but we are interested in shorter construction schedules and impacts – and these may be offered by a monorail concept. We ask Metro to present sufficient information at the summer 2019 public meetings for the public to understand the construction advantages and disadvantages.

Construction Impact Mitigation

15. Three of the refined concepts (HRT 2, HRT 3, and MRT 1) include an underground station at the Ventura-Sepulveda Boulevards intersection. SOHA feels that a station in this vicinity is mandatory for these concepts but is very concerned about negative impacts during construction – which will last many years. The Ventura-Sepulveda intersection is one of the busiest in the nation and is severely constricted by the I-405 and I-101 freeways, the Sepulveda Basin, the lack of freeway on- and off-ramps in the area, and minimal east-west alternate traffic route options. Construction of a large underground station at this location will be a traveler’s worst nightmare and negatively impact drivers, bus riders, pedestrians, emergency vehicles, businesses, and the community at large for many years. If a Sepulveda-Ventura station becomes reality, we ask Metro to present and discuss their plans to mitigate construction impacts at the summer 2019 public meeting. Metro might alternately consider locating the station at the lot bounded by Sepulveda Boulevard, Camarillo Street, and the I-405/I-101 transition road.

16. SOHA has the same concerns and requests (as the prior comment) for Concept HRT 1 that would locate an underground station near the Ventura and Van Nuys Boulevards intersection, even though this intersection presents somewhat fewer traffic challenges. Such a station would again be mandatory, and the construction impacts would be severe. Metro might consider other locations slightly north of the intersection.

Operation and Safety Considerations

17. In traversing the Sepulveda Pass, either in tunnels, at grade, or on an aerial track, there will be significant grades and elevation changes. SOHA recommends that Metro present substantive information at the summer 2019 public meetings on how trains, monorails, or trams would be protected in runaway and other potential emergency situations.

37. [New Comment] SOHA is very worried about rider safety on Metro. Many of our members have expressed concerns that they feel unsafe on Metro transit, especially at night. One of this letter’s authors recently experienced a very uncomfortable ride on the Red Line. Many people tell us that they used to ride Metro but no longer ride because they are afraid. Such fears obviously contribute to degraded ridership. We know that Metro takes rider safety seriously and applaud the switch to LAPD for transit patrols. We urge Metro to take further steps, such as improved public relations efforts, additional patrols, and possibly a Metro web-based emergency notification app. These would improve public safety and help diminish negative public perceptions. It would be very appropriate for Metro to include some discussion on public safety at the summer 2019 public hearings.
38. [New Comment] Currently, there is WiFi coverage available on some underground Metro transit lines, including coverage on some downtown sections of the Red Line. Metro should include discussions about WiFi coverage on all underground sections of the Sepulveda Transit corridor project at the summer 2019 public meetings.

Seismic

18. In talking with SOHA members and constituents, we have learned that many persons fear traveling in underground tunnels because of possible earthquake impacts. Metro has noted that properly located and constructed tunnels are actually safer than ground-level or aerial routes during earthquakes and SOHA agrees with this assessment. However, Metro has so far supported their seismic claims with only anecdotal information. The main danger due to earthquakes for an underground subway system is not protecting the cars and trains when they are enclosed in their reinforced tunnel, but instead protecting passengers when they are forced to evacuate a train or station and get to the surface, which may be covered with building debris and other rubble that makes it difficult or impossible to exit. Safe evacuation can be even more difficult if the tunnel section is very long between stations, such as the proposed tunnel through the Sepulveda Pass that is 5.5 miles long between the Sunset Boulevard and Ventura Boulevard stations. We recommend that Metro develop a substantive engineering-based explanation concerning tunnel and passenger safety during earthquakes and present it at the summer 2019 public meetings. It’s never too early to discuss safety concerns.

19. The City of Los Angeles has implemented their Shake Alert LA early earthquake warning system. This system can provide several seconds of warning before a serious earthquake and would allow trains to slow down or stop to minimize chances of derailing. It would also allow station elevators to hold their doors open at a floor. We recommend that Metro present information at the summer 2019 public meetings on how they are implementing the Shake Alert LA system.

20. At its February 2, 2019 public meeting, Metro noted that they were evaluating the impacts of the Santa Monica earthquake fault and other faults near the Westside routes. As part of this evaluation, Metro should consider SOHA’s recommendation to convert portions of the underground Westside routes into aerial routes (see comment 2 on the equitable division of aerial routes between the Valley and Westside).

21. Two of Metro’s refined concepts (HRT 3 and MRT 1) include aerial segments and portions of these might be extremely elevated, such as the overpass above the I-101 freeway in Sherman Oaks which could easily more than 35 feet above street level. Such elevated structures are subject to high accelerations during seismic events, possibly significant enough to derail trains. Metro must present and discuss this at the summer 2019 public meetings, so the public fully understands any potential seismic safety concerns for aerial systems.

39. [New Comment] Elevated or at-grade heavy rail trains simply ride on their tracks and are not constrained horizontally or vertically during seismic events. Monorail trains ride on and around a beam-type track that offers significant horizontal constraint and some vertical constraint during seismic events. We request Metro to provide further information on the performance of heavy rail versus monorail trains during seismic events at the summer 2019 public meetings. Such considerations are very important to making the correct final concept decisions.

Tunneling

22. SOHA has begun to hear several concerns from the public about the detrimental impacts of tunneling on our community. These concerns range from vibrations that damage house foundations to the collapse of hillsides to widespread housing damage far from tunneling sites. SOHA understands that the tunnels will be deep, especially under the mountains in the Sepulveda Pass, and feels that current tunneling technology should result in few problems to our community. However, to alleviate tunneling concerns, we feel that Metro should include substantive information on tunneling at the summer 2019 public meetings.
Noise and Vibration

23. [Revised] Concepts HRT 3 and MRT 1 include east-west routes along Raymer Street near some residential communities. Some residents are concerned about potential noise and vibration impacts along these segments, even if trains are operating underground. We recommend that Metro conduct detailed seismic, vibration, and noise studies for all aerial concepts and present the results at the summer 2019 public meetings.

Stations

24. All four refined concepts have a station at Ventura Boulevard which is either underground or elevated. For decades the airports were used only to service passengers and load and unload aircraft. Now they have become shopping centers since there are many available customers sitting around waiting for a plane with needs for services such as food, entertainment, reading material, and other travel related accessories. In the future there will likely be, as there are now in Japan, London, Moscow, and other well-developed subway systems, shopping opportunities for passengers at underground stations where they can relax, rest, eat, use restrooms, and partake of whatever amenities are available. Metro might look ahead to those potential uses and think about providing areas where they might be integral with or adjacent to subway stations.

25. The HRT 1 and HRT 2 concepts each have three stations – at Ventura Boulevard, the Orange Line, and the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The HRT 3 and MRT 1 concepts each have four stations – at Ventura Boulevard, the Orange Line, Sherman Way, and the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. Station connectivity makes rapid transit efficient and effective. For people to give up their cars they have to be able to go door-to-door easily. We hope that Metro plans to increase regular bus service near stations. For example, if many people ride the Sepulveda Transit Corridor and exit at Ventura Boulevard, Metro should increase bus service on streets running both north-south and east-west to easily and quickly get people to their final destinations. Metro should present their plans for increased bus service at the summer 2019 public meetings.

26. When the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project is complete, travelers will easily travel from the Van Nuys Metrolink Station to LAX – a very long distance. Metro must build stations with restroom facilities if they want passengers to endure these long rides. One of our board members regularly rides the Orange Line, then Red Line, then Expo Line from Sherman Oaks to Exposition Park. Metro has zero restrooms in any of the stations, and the ride is often quite challenging.

27. The MRT 1 monorail concept operates above ground along the western shoulder of the I-405 freeway and offers the possibility of one or two additional stations near the Skirball Museum and/or Getty Center. These stations could serve not only museum visitors but also the Leo Baeck Temple and many other people who live or work in nearby neighborhoods. The downside of the stations would be additional end-to-end travel time along the route. We estimate at least two minutes additional travel time per station, which would increase the total route travel time from 26 minutes to at least 30 minutes. Metro should determine whether additional stations are desired and necessary at these locations and present their recommendations including artist renditions at the summer 2019 public meetings.

Parking

28. SOHA is very concerned that aerial concepts HRT 3 and MRT 1 will remove street parking from Sepulveda Boulevard along the entire route from Valley Vista Boulevard north to Raymer Street. There are multiple business and residential areas along the boulevard that rely on street parking. Metro should try to eliminate zero parking as it refines its two aerial concepts. One potential solution is converting Valley aerial routes to underground routes as SOHA recommended in comment 2.
29. [Revised] As was apparent from multiple questions at the February 2nd public meeting, parking at stations is a critical concern and its presence or absence could make or break early ridership gains for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor. We have heard multiple complaints from our community members about how they would love to ride Metro but cannot park at stations. Riding a bike or walking may be difficult for elderly, disabled, or medically challenges persons, and these people will always comprise a significant sector of the population. SOHA also suggests that smaller distributed parking structures could be added along the Orange Line, so drivers could easily park and ride the Orange Line to a station and transfer to underground Sepulveda Transit Corridor trains (and also East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor ground-level LRT). Such a distribution of parking structures might provide for less station crowding and could complement a large central parking facility. These sites could be distributed along the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project or at other sites along the north-south I-405 freeway. A carefully planned distributed parking solution might also help reduce congestion near Ventura Boulevard that squeezes southbound traffic into an ever-narrowing “funnel”. SOHA recommends that Metro conduct a careful analysis of how best to disperse parking and develop effective regional parking solutions for both the Valley and Westside. Metro should present its results at the summer 2019 public meetings to help garner early support.

30. All four concepts need a multi-story parking structure near the I-405 and northern project terminus that would incentivize drivers to exit the freeway and use rapid transit. We understand Metro’s concerns with the effectiveness and high cost of parking; but if Metro’s goal is removing drivers from the I-405 and attracting drivers from the North Valley and North County, then massive parking is simply mandatory. An easily accessible, multi-story parking structure is needed as close as possible to both the I-405 and a Metro station, with rapid connections to both the freeway and station. Chart 17 from the referenced Metro presentation shows an excellent location for such a structure at Sepulveda Boulevard and Sherman Way (see figure at right). For cost effectiveness, such a large parking structure should be designed and constructed with the knowledge that one day it may not be needed for parking cars and instead could be easily retrofitted for another use, such as housing. For example, the initial design should use exterior ramps for accessing floors to ease conversion.

31. Metro’s Scott Page presented information about a potential major transit center at the northern terminus of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project during the June 21, 2018 San Fernando Valley Council of Governments Transportation Committee meeting as part of Metro’s NextGen Bus Study. This is a terrific idea and should also include a large parking structure. SOHA recommends that Metro pursue this concept and present possibilities at the summer 2019 public meetings.
Maintenance and Storage Facilities

32. The Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project will require maintenance and storage facilities. Providing sufficient future transit capacity to meet demand along the corridor will require large numbers of transit vehicles, and the storage facilities may be very large. The location of maintenance and storage facilities can displace local property owners and cause strong local opposition, as seen for the East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor project. In addition, there appear to be few viable sites available along the Valley-to-Westside Sepulveda Transit Corridor project route. One possibility might share maintenance and storage facilities for Sepulveda Corridor HRT and East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor LRT, since both would now have access to the planned ESFVTC facility. We understand that Metro will be studying maintenance as part of the final phase of their feasibility study and hope that Metro would provide early information (including locations) for potential maintenance and storage facilities for the final concepts before the summer 2019 public meetings. Addressing a controversial topic early is often the best path to reach public buy-in.

Progress Updates

33. The public is very interested in the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project, as shown by the large attendance at Metro’s public meetings. They wait breathlessly for six or more months between meetings for the next update. SOHA recommends that Metro begin posting progress updates on its website and notifying interested people about the updates. These can be posted as available and only a few sentences highlighting any significant event or decision, such as a concept change or public-private partnership opportunity. We feel such progress updates would go a long way in garnering the public support for the project.

Thank you.

If you have questions or would like to discuss our comments, please contact me at BobHillsideOrdinance@roadrunner.com or 213-364-7470.

Sincerely,

Bob Anderson, MS, PE (NU 474)
Chair, Transportation Committee
Board Member
Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association

Marshall Long, PhD, PE (M 18759)
Chair, Planning and Land Use Committee
Board Member
Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association

Attachment A: MRT 2 – An Alternative Valley-to-LAX Monorail Concept Through the Sepulveda Pass

cc: Joshua Schank (Metro), Karen Swift (Metro), Frank Ching (Metro), Mayor Eric Garcetti, Councilmember David Ryu (CD4), Nick Greif (CD4 office), Adeena Bleich (CD4 office), Daniel Eyal (CD4 office), Councilmember Nury Martinez (CD6), Ackley Padilla (CD6 office), Arcelia Arce (CD6 office), Yvonne Perez (CD6 office), Councilmember Paul Krekorian (CD2), Doug Mensman (CD2 office), Councilmember Bob Blumenfield (CD3), John Popoch (CD3 office), Jeff Jacobberger (CD3 office), Councilmember Paul Koretz (CD5), Joan Pelico (CD5 office), Jay Greenstein (CD5 office), Councilmember Monica Rodriguez (CD7), Doug Tripp (CD7 office), Council President Herb Wesson Jr (CD10), Andrew Westall (CD10 office), Senator Bob Hertzberg (18th district), Raj Dhillon (district office), Barri Worth Girvan (district office), Assemblyman Adrin Nazarian (46th district), Emma Taylor (district office), Congressman Brad Sherman (30th district), John Alford (district office), Supervisor Sheila Kuehl (3rd district), Nicole Englund (district office), John Bwarie (SFVCOG), Stuart Waldman (VICA), Ron Ziff (SONC), Avo Babian (SONC), Jeff Kalban (SONC), George Thomas (VNNC), Steve Friedmann (VNNC)

Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association (SOHA)
Today's Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Dilemma

Metro is currently evaluating four concepts for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project and will make their final concept selections in summer 2019. Concepts HRT 1 and HRT 2 are very costly fully underground heavy rail routes. Concept HRT 3 is a somewhat less costly heavy rail route elevated above Sepulveda Boulevard in only the Valley. Concept MRT 1 is Metro’s least costly monorail route at grade level or elevated through the Sepulveda Pass and elevated above Sepulveda Boulevard in the Valley.

The Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association (SOHA) strongly supports the HRT 1 and HRT 2 concepts because they are fully underground with high-capacity and short travel times. SOHA strongly opposes the HRT 3 and MRT 1 concepts because they are inequitably aerial (elevated) only in the Valley while underground on the Westside and will encroach on the Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys communities.

The Sepulveda Transit Corridor project is expensive. Metro has only so much funding available from Measure M ($6.5 billion) or the 28x28 Initiative to accelerate project completion for the 2028 Olympics ($8.6 billion). The HRT 1 and HRT 2 concepts will cost $10 to $15 billion based on Metro’s latest contract for the similar Purple Line Extension project. The HRT 3 concept will cost $9 to $12 billion. Metro faces a funding shortfall of up to $8.5 billion. If they can’t find the funding, Metro’s only fallback alternative is their least costly MRT 1 concept ($7 to $9 billion).

Why Isn’t the MRT 1 Monorail Concept Viable?

The MRT 1 monorail concept operates elevated above Sepulveda Boulevard for five miles in the Valley and encroaches on Valley residents, businesses, streets, drivers, and pedestrians. The aerial track structures destroy light, air, and privacy in the nearby Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys communities, with a high potential for legal battles and delays. The track structures eliminate traffic lanes, increase traffic congestion, and reduce parking on Sepulveda Boulevard. The route crosses the I-405 freeway at two points, the I-101 freeway at one point, and the Orange Line overpass at another point. Construction in Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys will be a nightmare for years.

Most importantly, the MRT 1 concept is inequitable because it is fully aerial in the Valley while fully underground on the Westside. It transitions from underground to aerial in the Sepulveda Pass (near the Getty Center) and travels above ground to and through the Valley. It will cost more and take longer to build because of the underground Westside sections. Even this least costly concept may cost too much.

Metro simply needs a better, less costly, more equitable alternative monorail concept than MRT 1 that they can actually afford to build.

Meet MRT 2 – A Monorail Concept Above the I-405 Median

We’ve all seen artist concepts of a futuristic monorail running above a freeway median. It doesn’t take much to envision such a concept for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project. The concept could operate almost entirely above the I-405 freeway from the Van Nuys Metrolink all the way to LAX. What might this concept look like?
The alternative **MRT 2 concept** operates **aerial (elevated) above the I-405 freeway median** and is equitable to the Valley, Westside, and LAX communities. MRT 2 employs the same dual-track streamlined single support structure used for Metro’s MRT 1 concept. **MRT 2 has the same stations** as MRT 1 with a few situated in slightly different locations.

Because MRT 2 runs above the freeway median, there are minimal impacts on streets, communities, parking, and street traffic – even during construction. MRT 2 also reduces potential legal actions that could delay the project by years.

Monorails are inherently quieter than heavy rail and won’t disturb the community or I-405 drivers. Monorails are safe, designed with paths between the tracks for any emergency.

As shown below, MRT 2 travels under the Mulholland Bridge. It travels up and over the I-101 freeway and the Sunset Boulevard, Skirball, Orange Line, and Burbank Boulevard overpasses, as does Metro’s MRT 1 route over the I-101 and I-405 freeways. It travels over or around the major Santa Monica (10) and Marina (90) freeway interchanges, which are a bit more challenging but certainly doable.
More importantly, Metro can actually afford to build the less costly MRT 2 concept because it requires no underground tunneling or underground station construction. For the same reason, MRT 2 is quicker to build, although there will be construction impacts on freeway traffic. And the possibility of MRT 2 being ready from the Valley to LAX for the 2028 Olympics is tantalizing. The alternative MRT 2 concept is viable, equitable, and lowest-cost. Metro should adopt it today in place of the MRT 1 concept.

Many Station and Parking Options

There are the same number of stations along the MRT 2 route as MRT 1 and at approximately the same locations. The four Valley stations are at the Van Nuys Metrolink station, Sherman Way, the Orange Line, and Ventura Boulevard. The three Westside stations are at Sunset Boulevard, Wilshire Boulevard, and the Expo Line (near the I-10 freeway). The four southern stations are at Venice, Jefferson, and La Tiera Boulevards, and LAX.

There is excellent connectivity to two Metrorail train routes, the Orange Line busway, the Purple Line heavy rail subway, the Expo Line light rail, the Crenshaw Line light rail, and the LAX People Mover.

There are many station and parking options available at each location. The most easily constructed stations are located above the I-405 freeway median with elevated moving sidewalks to terminals, small or large multi-level parking, and even office complexes. Stations can also be located next to the freeway on dogleg tracks, as shown in the above-right example illustration.

The figure at the right provides information about a possible configuration of the Van Nuys Metrolink station (at Van Nuys Boulevard and Raymer Street). The subsequent four figures present similar information for station possibilities at four other locations along the MRT 2 route.
Good Capacity and Travel Time

MRT 2 operates three-car monorail trains with a four-minute frequency between trains, so passengers experience short wait times. Monorail trains operate up to 50 miles per hour providing about 105,000 daily passenger trips along the route – the same as MRT 1. The travel time between the Van Nuys Metrolink station and the Expo Line station is about 26 minutes – the same as MRT 1 – or possibly a bit quicker because the route is shorter. These are very reasonable operating parameters though not as good as fully underground concepts HRT 1 and HRT 2 with 120,000 to 123,000 daily passenger trips and 15- to 16-minute travel times. The difference is that MRT 2 is affordable.

MRT 2 – A Better and Affordable Monorail Alternative

Metro has a major challenge ahead – selecting the best possible Sepulveda Transit Corridor concept that they can actually afford to build. The Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association strongly supports the fully underground heavy rail routes – Metro Concepts HRT 1 and HRT 2. SOHA strongly opposes inequitable routes elevated in only the Valley – Metro Concepts HRT 3 and MRT 1. SOHA acknowledges that lack of sufficient funding may force Metro to select their least expensive current concept – the MRT 1 monorail running above Sepulveda Boulevard in the Valley. SOHA recommends that Metro immediately switch to a better and affordable concept – the very viable MRT 2 monorail running above the I-405 freeway median. **Metro is already evaluating a monorail concept – MRT 2 just moves the concept to a better location.** Metro shouldn’t wait to switch from MRT 1 to MRT 2 – it will be too late!

Bob Anderson is a retired aerospace engineer, Board Member of the Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association (ShermanOaks914.com), and chair of SOHA’s Transportation Committee. He can be reached at BobHillsideOrdinance@roadrunner.com.
February 22, 2019

Metro
One Gateway Plaza, M/S 99-22-5
Los Angeles, California 90012

Attn: Mr. Cory Zelmer, Project Manager

Re: Proposed Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project

Dear Mr. Zelmer:

The three (3) Bel Air Crest Homeowner Association Boards of Directors and community residents have submitted their concerns and/or questions regarding the above referenced project at Board Meetings held on February 22, 2019. This letter shall also serve as a follow-up to comments submitted at public meetings. In addition, the Associations may submit further documentation in the future for your consideration.

GENERAL ACCESSIBILITY TO and FROM BEL AIR CREST

The community would like to bring to your attention that BAC residents completely depend on the 405 Freeway and Sepulveda Boulevard for ingress and egress. BAC community members experienced the negative impact of construction during the 405 Freeway and Sepulveda Blvd construction projects.

REQUIREMENTS and RECOMMENDATIONS

The BAC Boards are in favor of HRT 1 or HRT 2. The Boards are not in favor of HRT 3 or MRT 1 due to the long term potential impact on accessibility to the community during construction.

The BAC Boards are requesting additional information on proposed express lanes on the 405 Freeway.

AIR / WATER / LAND

The Boards would like to bring to your attention the possible impact of construction of on existing infrastructure in the Sepulveda Pass Corridor.

REQUIREMENTS and RECOMMENDATIONS

The Boards want assurances that the construction of HRT 3 and MRT 1 will not negatively impact the petroleum and natural gas pipes that are located under
Mr. Cory Zelmer, Project Manager  
February 22, 2019  
Page 2

Sepulveda Boulevard and/or expose the BAC community to chemicals from said pipes. The BAC Boards are in favor of HRT 1 or HRT 2. The Boards are not in favor of HRT 3 or MRT 1 due to potential safety hazards during construction.

The Boards are requesting additional information including but not limited to, geological studies regarding proposed underground tunnels.

**PARKING AND TRAFFIC CORRIDORS**
Community Members voiced concerns regarding transit station parking facility locations and the number of proposed parking spaces.

**REQUIREMENTS and RECOMMENDATIONS**
The Boards recommend that parking structures be located on streets that do not serve as traffic corridors and that ample parking spaces be provided so commercial and/or residential parking is not impacted.

The Bel Air Crest Boards and community residents appreciate the value that the proposed effective high-capacity rapid transit will bring to Los Angeles. However, this project impacts the numerous communities, schools, and institutions, as well as, the movement of thousands who utilize the Sepulveda Pass corridor. The Boards look forward to receiving the requested documentation and updates regarding the proposed transit project.

Sincerely,

BEL AIR CREST MASTER ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
BEL AIR CREST CUSTOM HOMES ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
BEL AIR CREST CANYON HOMES ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Eiona Cole  
Bel Air Crest General Manager

cc: Councilman Paul Kortez CD 5
September 27, 2018

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952
Attn: Karen Swift

Re: Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project

Dear Ms. Swift,

We are writing to formally notify Metro that the Plan Review Board has taken a preliminary position on the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project. The Board unanimously voted to support heavy rail.

One of the major issues that the Board deals with is traffic. Good public transportation is essential in combatting the congestion experienced by our Valley residents. With a population of over 1.8 million people, it is crucial that a system be put into place that will handle the largest number of passengers and that is a heavy rail transportation system.

The Board will continue to monitor the progress of this Project.

You are welcome to contact me by email or phone.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Kathy Delle Donne- President, Plan Review Board
Ventura-Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan
kadedo@earthlink.net  818-497-4900
September 27, 2018

To Metro Management via Karen Swift

The Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council has studied the information available on the Sepulveda Pass Project and has a few recommendations and requests regarding the project and its impact on our community. These recommendations came from extensive studies done in our Traffic and Transportation Committee and our Planning and Land Use Committee. The Council voted unanimously to present the following to Metro Management.

Recommendation #1
The Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council recommends that the Sepulveda Pass Project be implemented with Heavy Rail. Following are our reasons.

Sherman Oaks is the site of the biggest regularly scheduled traffic congestion in the United States. Congestion begins shortly after 6:00 AM on week days and continues to varying degrees throughout the day until the evening hours. The congestion is centered at the intersections of the #405 and #101 Freeways and Sepulveda and Ventura Blvd. It then extends through the Sepulveda Pass and radiates through alternate canyon roads: Beverly Glen, Woodcliff/Roscomare, Benedict Canyon, Deep Canyon, and Coldwater Canyon. There are differing accounts as to the total number of
vehicles, but all accounts conclude that there are several hundred thousand vehicles involved each day.

It is important to have capacity to serve and to grow built into the system. Heavy rail is the only alternative that provides the capacity that will be needed for the future. Our fear is that if light rail were used and the project started operation next week, it would be operating at capacity immediately, with little room for growth. Subway systems all over the world become an integral part of the local transportation system and many have lasted decades and notably those in New York and London are over a century old. This system should be planned to serve both the population of the present and the future; built to serve them well and to last a century. Anything less would have to be replaced with a larger system later and be a waste of public funds.

The Red Line carries more than 160,000 riders a day. From the point of view of the Valley, the Sepulveda Pass Project has the potential to match or exceed that volume. But at the other end of the projected line is Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) which serves more than 41,000,000 passengers a year. The passenger load at the airport has grown 5-10% annually for the past few years. In addition about 59,000 people are directly employed at LAX and thousands more pass through the facility daily. The Sepulveda Pass Project should be built to serve the thousands traveling in and out of the airport daily. Only heavy rail can provide the capacity needed for those traveling to and from LAX now and in the future.

Recommendation #2
The Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council recommends that the Sepulveda Pass Project be constructed underground for its full length from the Valley to LAX. Following are our reasons.

Only heavy rail can provide the capacity needed in the Sepulveda Pass Project. It will have to pass under the Santa Monica Mountains. The portion of the rail line that originates in the Valley should be underground too. If the project operates above ground, it will compete for street space with autos, buses, pedestrians, bicycles, and other transportation. If it were at ground level the conflicts between these modes will result in slowed trains and snarled traffic. The worst possible results would be achieved if the project operated as a surface line and passed through the busiest crossroads of the country at the intersections of the #405 and #101 and Sepulveda Blvd and Ventura Blvd. The same difficulties exist south of the mountains to LAX. The best possible configuration is underground throughout the length of the line.
Request by the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council
The Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council voted to request Metro to release a list of all prospective sites being considered for station locations in the Valley for the Sepulveda Pass Project. If a written request is required in order to have this list of sites released to the Council, please consider this letter as a written Public Records Request.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ron Ziff
President, Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council (SONC)

Avo Babian
Chair, SONC Traffic and Transportation Committee

Jeff Kalban
Chair, SONC Planning and Land Use Committee
July 23, 2018 Revision 1

Mr. Cory Zelmer  
Program Manager, Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project  
LA Metro  
One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop 99-22-5  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
zelmerc@metro.net

Subject: SOHA Comments and Questions on the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project  
Reference: LA Metro, Next Stop: Exploring Alternatives to the 405 – Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project, Community Meetings Presentation and Presentation Boards, June 2018

Dear Mr. Zelmer,

The Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association represents 2,300 politically active families in a 70,000-person, southern San Fernando Valley community that is home to essentially the entire northern portion of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project study area (see Sherman Oaks map below). SOHA supports effective high-capacity rapid transit across Los Angeles and wants to ensure an equitable distribution of such rapid transit across all areas of the County, but especially the San Fernando Valley and our community. Our mission is ensuring that the Valley and our community receive a well-deserved fair share of high-quality rapid transit that meets not only current demands – but projected long-term demands well into the future.

SOHA participated in Metro’s referenced June 2018 public meetings for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project and appreciated the depth and breadth of information presented, especially at this early stage of the Project Feasibility Study. We submit the following 41 comments and questions concerning the project.
SOHA Comments and Questions on the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project – Revision 1 – July 23, 2018

Sepulveda Transit Corridor Goals

31. New Comment in Revision 1 – SOHA thinks that it is important to understand Metro’s overarching goals for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project. For example, is one of the primary goals reducing congestion on the I-405 by a certain amount? Is another goal minimizing travel time along the project route? Or maximizing capacity? SOHA recommends that Metro present and explain their overarching goals at the next set of public meetings, so future riders of the system can comment on them and help shape them.

Underground versus Aerial Alignment

1. Updated Comment for Revision 1 – SOHA’s position is simple – we will only support an alignment that is fully underground within our community boundaries. We will reject and strongly fight against any alignment that has any street-level or aerial segments within our boundaries. We have taken this position because the entirety of the Sepulveda Pass’s 412,000 daily drivers travels through Sherman Oaks, either on the freeway or on our streets. The most congested rush-hour north-south streets in our community are Sepulveda Boulevard, Van Nuys Boulevard, and Beverly Glen Boulevard, from Burbank Boulevard to Valley Vista Boulevard and Mulholland Drive. Any street-level or aerial rapid transit along or near any of these streets will only increase the congestion in Sherman Oaks and are therefore not viable options for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project.

32. New Comment in Revision 1 – Perhaps cities or the county should tax local areas with subway stations (versus street-level stations) based on their convenience for passengers. Such a tax might serve to incentivize subway systems through an additional revenue stream and could help solve the lack of subways in certain areas such as the San Fernando Valley.

System Capacity

2. Updated Comment for Revision 1 – SOHA has concerns about the current and long-term capacity of all concepts, but especially LRT, monorail, and rubber-tired trains. We want to understand which concepts can best provide the necessary capacity in the Sepulveda Pass today, in the future (with the 18 percent increase in automobile travelers, from 412,000 daily to 484,000 projected for 2042), and beyond. We especially need high capacities that will meet long-term demands. To give us a feel for the capacity issues, we made some simple estimates for the HRT and LRT options. These estimates led to our favoring the HRT concepts and to the questions that follow, in the hope that we and the public can learn enough by the next set of public meetings to feel comfortable with the capacity situation.

We understand that determining system capacity is complex, requiring sophisticated computer simulations and analyses. However, to make some simple comparisons, we looked at only the Sepulveda Pass route segment (between the final Valley station and the initial Westside station). We estimated the number of travelers driving through the Pass during rush-hour periods (6 am to 10 am and 3 pm to 7 pm) by assuming that one-third to one-half of the 412,000 total daily travelers drive through the Pass during each of these rush-hour periods – or about 137,000 to 206,000 travelers.

We then estimated the maximum possible capacity for a completely filled train traveling on this single segment through the Pass, using Metro’s information on train capacity from the public meetings. The longer 8-car HRT train can accommodate 1,080 passengers; the longer 4-car LRT train can accommodate 540 passengers. We made an optimistic estimate of headway (time between trains) at two minutes during rush-hour periods. This is short compared to other Metro lines in operation – the Red Line has a 10-minute headway during rush-hour periods and the Expo Line a 12-minute headway. However, the London Underground system routinely operates with two-minute headways during rush-hour periods. A two-minute headway equates to 30 trains per hour, which is optimistically achievable but would require significant capital investment for many more trains and sophisticated safety
controls. With a two-minute headway, the HRT maximum capacity through the Pass over the four rush-hours would be about 128,000 passengers; an LRT maximum Pass capacity would be about 64,000 passengers. These capacities could both provide significant reductions in drivers through the Pass – a 60 to 90 percent reduction for HRT and half that for LRT.

Alternately, at Metro’s typical 10-minute headway (six trains per hour like the Red Line), the through-the-Pass capacity drops to 26,000 passengers for HRT and 13,000 passengers for LRT. So, at a 10-minute headway, the higher-capacity HRT system would have enough capacity to remove 13 to 19 percent of current rush-hour travelers through the Pass – and lesser percentages by 2042. This is not the significant reduction that Metro hints at during public meetings nor sufficient to help alleviate congestion through the Sepulveda Pass.

Our simple estimates illustrate why the public needs additional information from Metro on system capacity, headway, and potential congestion relief – and further understanding of Metro’s willingness to commit additional investments in rolling stock and safety systems to achieve higher capacities, lower headways, and maximum congestion alleviation. We request that Metro provide more detailed data and analyses at, or hopefully before, the next set of public meetings, including the level of congestion relief offered by each project concept. The public needs to understand which of Metro’s concepts might significantly alleviate traffic now and well into the future – and which can’t.

3. The public meeting presentation noted that there are 412,000 travelers daily through the Sepulveda Pass and that this number is expected to increase 18 percent by 2042. These numbers are critical to Sherman Oaks, as we are the choke point for all these travelers. We request that Metro provide additional detail about this aggregate number, so that the public can further analyze traffic congestion and understand how much capacity is required to truly alleviate it. We also request that Metro subdivide and report the daily traveler number in time segments, such as morning rush-hour, mid-day, and evening rush-hour (or, better yet, average travelers per hour for each hour of the day). We also request peak travelers per hour through the Pass during morning and evening rush-hours. Finally, Metro needs to clarify whether the 412,000-traveler aggregate number includes only I-405 travelers, or does it also include travelers on Sepulveda Boulevard and other Sherman Oaks streets that feed the Westside (such as Woodcliff Road, Scadlock Lane, and Beverly Glen Boulevard). This is the type of information that the public needs to understand the true situation.

4. **Updated Comment for Revision 1** – The public meeting provided no discussion of headway or estimates of the numbers of trains running per hour for any of the concepts. Such information is necessary to understand the real capacity of each proposed concept, and that capacity will provide a gage of how well each concept can help alleviate traffic congestion. We request that Metro provide their current minimum headway estimates and current estimated trains per hour during rush-hour periods for all four transit modes (HRT, LRT, monorail, and rubber-tire transit), along with a discussion of Metro’s willingness to purchase, operate, and maintain a much larger fleet of trains necessary to reduce headway and increase capacity. Again, this is the type of information that the public needs to understand the real capacity situation and make informed decisions. We understand that this type of information will become available as initial studies are completed, and request that Metro makes this information available to the public as soon as possible.

**Maintenance/Storage Facilities**

5. **Updated Comment for Revision 1** – The Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project will require one or more maintenance and storage facilities. Providing sufficient future transit capacity to meet demand along the corridor will require large numbers of transit vehicles, and the storage facilities (where the vehicles park when not in use) may be very large. The location of maintenance and storage facilities can displace local property owners and cause strong local opposition, as currently demonstrated by the East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor Project. In addition, there appear to be few viable sites
available along the Valley-to-Westside segment of the project, although Concept 6 makes this segment an extension of the Purple Line with possible use of the Red/Purple Line maintenance and storage facility (if it is sufficiently robust). For LRT Concepts 4 and 5, there is also the possibility of using the ESFVTC maintenance and storage facility (again if it is sufficiently robust). One additional possibility might be sharing maintenance and storage facilities for HRT and LRT concepts, since we believe that these both use the same standard track gage (albeit third rail versus overhead catenary power and quite different maintenance equipment). This could provide a more efficient dual use for such existing facilities and could allow a more efficient use of these facilities. SOHA recommends that Metro provide information (including locations) for potential maintenance and storage facilities for all concepts at or before the next set of public meetings. Addressing a controversial topic early is often the best path to reach public buy-in.

**Construction Impacts**

6. Two of the concepts (2 and 6) offer the option of an underground station at the Ventura-Sepulveda Boulevards intersection. SOHA feels that a station in this vicinity is mandatory for these alignments, but we are very concerned about negative impacts during construction. The Ventura-Sepulveda intersection is one of the busiest in the country and is severely constricted by the I-405 and I-101 freeways, the Sepulveda Basin, the lack of on- and off-ramps in the area, and the minimal East-West access options. Construction of a large underground station at this location would be a nightmare for travelers (auto, bus, bicycle, and pedestrian), businesses, and the community at large. If Metro ends up considering this station location, we ask that they present and discuss their plans to minimize construction impacts no later than the next set of public meetings. Metro might also consider locating the station nearby at the lot bounded by Sepulveda Boulevard, Camarillo Street, and the I-405/I-101 transition road.

7. SOHA has the same concerns and requests as the comment above for those concepts (1, 3, 4, and 6) that would locate an underground station near the Ventura-Van Nuys Boulevards intersection. A station location in the vicinity would again be mandatory, and the construction impacts would be severe. Metro might consider other locations slightly north of the intersection.

**Improved Tunneling Technologies**

33. *New Comment in Revision 1* – Because they may yield significant cost savings, in addition to traditional twin-bore tunneling technology, SOHA recommends that Metro seriously considers newer tunnel-boring technologies such as large single-bore tunneling being used in Europe and the one being developed by Elon Musk’s Boring Company in Hawthorne. There are serendipitous advantages in trying to meld applicable portions of each technology. One advantage of the Musk technology is significantly reduced tunneling cost through on-site tunnel-wall segment fabrication and reuse of waste materials from the boring operation. Another advantage is use of electrical vehicles to move railcars along the boring equipment tracks. It is possible that these vehicles might be applied to the Metro project and receive electrical recharging from the Metro conductors. One advantage is that the stored energy in these vehicles can be used in situations where power is lost and there is a need to move railcars in a normal or emergency situation. Another advantage is that vehicles could be charged with suitable electrical interconnects from the Metro power rails. As noted by Councilman Bob Blumenfeld, Chair of the San Fernando Valley Council of Government’s Transportation Committee at their June 21, 2018 meeting, it is critical that the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project concept selection analyses and comparisons use the lowest possible tunneling cost metrics, versus outdated, lower-technology cost metrics that could skew the concept down-selection process.
Safety Concerns

34. New Comment in Revision 1 – In traversing the Sepulveda Pass, either in tunnels or on the surface, there will be significant grades and elevation changes. SOHA recommends that Metro present information at the next set of public meetings on how trains or other vehicles would be protected from runaway situations in emergencies.

Seismic Concerns

8. Updated Comment for Revision 1 – In talking with SOHA members and constituents, we learned that many persons fear traveling in underground tunnels because of possible earthquake impacts. Metro has noted that properly constructed tunnels are actually safer than ground-level or aerial systems during earthquakes; however, much of this has been currently confirmed only through anecdotal information or historical events. We recommend that Metro develop a substantive engineering-based explanation concerning tunnel safety during earthquakes and present this at the next set of public meetings. It’s never too early to discuss safety concerns, and we provide some further thoughts in the following paragraphs.

Earthquakes are a not an infrequent occurrence in Southern California areas. They are prone to cause more damage at the surface than they are below ground; therefore, subways are relatively safe while the train is in the tunnel. The real problem is getting stranded passengers to the surface after an earthquake. For example, if an earthquake struck while a train was near the middle of the long and deep Sepulveda Pass tunnel section, how would passengers get to the surface? Would the train travel under emergency power to the next station? Would the passengers be required to disembark the train and walk several miles underground to the station? Would there be intermediate escape routes from the tunnel? These are only a few of the questions that Metro needs to answer and present to the public.

Earthquake safety for both underground and above-ground transportation systems is a complex and technically difficult issue. Earthquakes usually originate with subsurface earth movement generated by movement of a tectonic plate relative to an adjacent plate. In Southern California, this is by and large a strike-slip movement, particularly along the San Andres fault. When an earthquake occurs, it generates a vibrational wave, which propagates out from the center of the disturbance in all directions. The initial vibrations are generally compression waves, much like a Slinky, where the motion is along the same axis as the direction of propagation. These P (pressure) waves are characterized by high-pressure, low-displacement vibration. There are also S (shear) waves, where the displacement is perpendicular to the direction of propagation. Subway tunnels in their cylindrical reinforced concrete tubes can be highly effective in resisting the forces of both the P and S waves. However, when these waves reach the earth’s surface they change form due to the fact that the surface is a pressure-release surface, which changes the vibration to low-pressure, high-displacement, more disruptive motion. There are two common forms of the surface waves, the first being named a Love wave, which is a lateral motion of the surface, and the second being a Rayleigh wave, which is like an ocean wave, where the motion is elliptical. The Rayleigh surface wave is the most dangerous since its amplitude is larger and the waves can violently oscillate structures, such as stations.

As a result, the main danger due to earthquakes for an underground subway system is not protecting the cars and trains when they are enclosed in their reinforced tunnel, but instead protecting passengers when they are forced to evacuate the train or station and get to the surface, which may be covered with building debris and other rubble that makes it difficult or impossible to exit. We have not seen any analyses from Metro or others developing subway systems that address the surface-subway interface and emergency evacuations under earthquake or post-earthquake scenarios. Public presentation of such information is critical to ensure future public acceptance and usage.
9. The state of California is planning to implement an early earthquake warning system over the next few years. This system would provide many seconds of warning before a serious earthquake and allow trains to slow down or stop to minimize chances of derailing. Does Metro plan to incorporate such seismic warning features in its current and future rapid transit systems?

10. Certain of Metro’s concepts include aerial segments and portions of these might be extremely elevated, such as an overpass above the I-101 freeway in Sherman Oaks which could easily be 35 feet above street level, or even higher. Such elevated structures are subject to high accelerations during seismic events, possibly significant enough to derail trains. Could Metro please present and discuss this at its next set of public meetings, so the public fully understands any potential seismic safety concerns for aerial systems?

Noise and Vibration Concerns

35. New Comment in Revision 1 – Concept 5 includes an east-west segment along Burbank Boulevard through a residential community in Sherman Oaks. Residents have already expressed their concerns to SOHA concerning potential noise and vibration impacts along these segments, even if trains are operating underground. We request that Metro present information at the next set of public meetings on noise and vibration impacts to residents for all concepts in all underground and aerial alignments. We further request that Metro relocate the Burbank Boulevard potential segment to Oxnard Street which is commercial (see comment 37).

Concept Selection Evaluation Criteria

11. Updated Comment for Revision 1 – At the referenced public presentation, Metro listed the evaluation criteria for selection of final concepts, including: (1) ridership; (2) travel time savings; (3) reliability; (4) community input; (5) cost; (6) cost-effectiveness; (7) compatibility with local and regional plans; (8) potential environmental effects; and (9) sustainability. We understand that these criteria are used by the Federal Transit Administration in selecting projects worthiness for Federal funding but wonder why Metro did not include additional relevant criteria for current capacity, future capacity, maintainability, construction impacts, and seismic impacts. We recommend that Metro consider such additional criteria or explain why these are not considered at the next set of public meetings.

12. Updated Comment for Revision 1 – Could Metro please provide additional detail on the evaluation and selection process that they use in selecting final concepts for further study? This information would include a list of all evaluation criteria, definitions and explanations for each criterion, and the numerical percentage weightings and priority order for the criteria. This information should be made available before the next set of public meetings to give the public time to understand it. Please also explain if Metro does not employ weightings or priorities as part of their evaluation process.

Concept 1

13. Concept 1 is a viable, fully underground HRT alignment. It offers the highest capacity potential and transfer connections at Van Nuys Boulevard to the Orange Line and East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor (ESFVTC) project. The concept deserves further consideration but currently lacks necessary multi-story parking located further north with direct connection to the I-405 freeway (see comment 30).
14. **Updated Comment for Revision 1** – Sadly, Concept 1 cannot continue as HRT along the ESFVTC alignment to the Sylmar MetroLink station because Metro never considered an HRT option for the ESFVTC. In hindsight, this past Metro decision eliminated the possibility of a single HRT line from Sylmar to LAX, and this was shortsighted and shameful. The Metro Board recently decided to pursue the highest-capacity street-level LRT option for the ESFVTC project, but it is sad that Metro didn’t at least studied a fully underground HRT ESFVTC option – even with its higher cost – to give the Valley an option to receive its fair share.

**Concept 2**

15. Concept 2 is a viable HRT alignment only if fully underground. It offers the highest capacity potential and separate transfer connections to the Orange Line and EVTC project. The concept deserves further consideration but currently lacks necessary multi-story parking located further north with direct connection to the I-405 freeway (see comment 30).

16. Concept 2 with an aerial segment in Sherman Oaks is not viable. Any aerial segment will be unsightly, obtrusive, and interfere with traffic. The thought of using a 35-foot high elevated overpass to cross above the I-101 freeway near Sepulveda is not sensible and not sensitive to the public and our community.

**Concept 3**

17. Concept 3 is a viable, fully underground LRT alignment along Van Nuys Boulevard. It offers transfer connections to the Orange Line and East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor (ESFVTC) project at a single station (with possible nonstop continuation north to Sylmar), but its use of LRT limits the concept’s capacity to about half that of HRT concepts – and this is troubling for a system that is trying to displace current and projected traffic congestion from the I-405. The concept deserves further consideration but currently lacks necessary multi-story parking located further north with direct connection to the I-405 freeway (see comment 30).

36. **New Comment in Revision 1** – The Metro Board has selected street-level LRT for the ESFVTC project. The 9.2-mile alignment has 14 stations to accommodate the needs of local passengers and effectively interface with multiple east-west bus services in the area. However, this large number of stations over the 9.2-mile route is approximately double the station density along other Metro LRT routes. The ESFVTC will therefore require increased headway and slower travel time to accommodate the additional stations. This in turn creates a challenge for either Concept 3 or 4 directly connecting LRT trains between the Sepulveda Transit Corridor and the ESFVTC projects. In addition, the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project proposes using LRT trains that may be too long for station platforms along the ESFVTC. Could Metro please discuss these operational challenges at the next set of public meetings, so the public could understand the true benefits and challenges of a direct connection between the two projects?
Concept 4

18. Concept 4 is a viable LRT alignment only if fully underground. It offers transfer connections to the Orange Line and East Valley Transit Corridor (EVTC) project at a single station (with possible nonstop continuation north to Sylmar), but its use of LRT limits the concept’s capacity to about half that of HRT concepts – and this is troubling for a system that is trying to displace current and projected traffic congestion from the I-405. The concept deserves further consideration but currently lacks necessary multi-story parking located further north with direct connection to the I-405 freeway (see comment 30).

19. The west-running spur along the Orange Line alignment is an interesting concept, but we question its usefulness. The spur would better run in a northwest direction toward the I-405 north of Sherman Way, where a multi-story parking structure could be provided (see comment 30).

Concept 5

20. Concept 5 using monorail is not viable. It introduces yet another technology to Metro’s system, which is unnecessary. It provides the lowest capacity potential of all transit modes. It is slower than HRT or LRT. It appears to be at grade or aerial in Sherman Oaks and this is a non-starter (although the legend is confusing and needs clarification).

21. Concept 5 using rubber-tired vehicles is possibly viable only if fully underground in Sherman Oaks. It introduces yet another technology to Metro’s system, which is probably unnecessary. It does possibly offer the highest capacity potential of all transit modes, but we would need additional information confirming this. It is slower than HRT or LRT. It appears to be at grade or aerial in Sherman Oaks and this is a non-starter (although the legend is confusing and needs clarification).

37. New Comment in Revision 1 – Concept 5 includes a potential east-west aerial segment along Burbank Boulevard through a residential neighborhood. This alignment seriously concerns Sherman Oaks residents in the area. An aerial monorail or aerial rubber-tired train would cause traffic challenges, significant noise, and potential other disruptions which SOHA considers unacceptable. The Burbank Boulevard segment should be relocated to Oxnard Street (which is commercial) and Concept 5 limited to only underground alignments.

Concept 6

22. Concept 6, in either the route on Sepulveda or Van Nuys Boulevards, is a viable HRT alignment only if fully underground. It offers the highest capacity potential, transfer connections to the Orange Line and East Valley Transit Corridor (EVTC) project, and direct no-transfer connection to the Purple Line on the Westside. The concept deserves further consideration but currently lacks necessary multi-story parking located further north with direct connection to the I-405 freeway (see comment 30).
Stations

23. A large underground station near Ventura Boulevard is mandatory for either alignments under Sepulveda Boulevard or alignments under Van Nuys Boulevard. Parking at these locations is probably not viable, practical, or desirable.

24. All underground concept alignments seem to preclude the possibility of any stations in the Sepulveda Pass between Ventura Boulevard and Sunset Boulevard, because the tunnels are located too far east of the freeway and possible station locations. In addition, the alignments may be too far underground for practical stations, though the London Underground has some very deep stations. Metro should consider the possibility of providing Getty Museum and Sunset Boulevard stations (Concept 6 may pose the most viable route for these).

25. The possible stations on Magnolia Boulevard at either Sepulveda Boulevard or Van Nuys Boulevard (depending on concept alignment) are important, should be provided, and must be underground. Having no parking at these stations is probably viable, but community input is needed.

26. The stations on Burbank Boulevard at either Sepulveda Boulevard or Van Nuys Boulevard (depending on concept alignment) are important, should be provided, and must be underground. Parking at these stations may not be effective because of severe rush-hour traffic congestion on Burbank Boulevard. In addition, the I-405 on-and off-ramps at Burbank Boulevard are some of the most congested in the area. Parking at these locations may not be practical because of traffic congestion.

27. Station connectivity makes rapid transit efficient and effective. For people to give up their cars they have to be able to go door-to-door easily. Does Metro plan to increase regular bus lines that run by stations? For example, if many people ride the Sepulveda Transit Corridor and exit at Ventura Boulevard, will Metro increase bus lines on streets running north/south and east/west to get people to their final destination? If not, why not?

28. When the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project is complete, travelers will easily travel from Sylmar to LAX—a very long distance. Metro must build stations with bathroom facilities if they want passengers to endure these long rides. One of our board members regularly rides the Orange Line, then Red Line, then Expo Line from Sherman Oaks to Exposition Park. Metro has zero bathrooms in any of the stations, and the ride is often challenging.

Parking

29. Updated Comment for Revision 1 – It is important that there be a large intercept parking facility and transfer center near the I-405 at the terminus of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project. Metro already has a large street-level parking lot off of Sepulveda Boulevard at the Orange Line (near Oxnard Street). This lot could be available for a multi-story parking structure with a direct or very close connection to the I-405. This would incentivize drivers to exit the freeway and take rapid transit.

30. Updated Comment for Revision 1 – All six concepts suffer from having no northerly multi-story parking structure near the I-405 that would incentivize drivers to exit the freeway and use rapid transit. We understand Metro’s concerns with the effectiveness and high cost of parking; but if Metro’s goal is removing drivers from the I-405 and attracting drivers from the North Valley and North County, then massive parking is simply mandatory. An easily accessible, multi-story parking structure should be located as close to the I-405 as possible, with a direct or very close connection to the I-405 (a direct off-ramp from the I-405 southbound and a direct on-ramp to the I-405 northbound would be wonderful, as with Universal...
Studios and Disneyland’s parking structures). The parking structure should be located as far north as possible (at least north of Sherman Way as shown in the example at the right for Concept 1). All concepts are amenable to adding such a parking structure and station but would require some route realignment and addition of an underground spur to the structure. The additional investment should prove extremely cost effective.

38. **New Comment in Revision 1** – SOHA also suggests that smaller distributed parking structures could be added along the Orange Line, so drivers could easily park and ride the Orange Line to a station and transfer to underground Sepulveda Transit Corridor trains (and also East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor ground-level LRT). Such a distribution of parking structures might provide for less station crowding and could complement a large central parking facility. These sites could be distributed along the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project or at other sites along the north-south I-405 freeway. The distribution of parking would help alleviate crowding, which might occur if one major lot were located at the intersection of the Orange Line and the Sepulveda Transit Corridor northern terminus.

39. **New Comment in Revision 1** – Metro’s Scott Page presented information about a potential major transit center at the northern terminus of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project during the June 21, 2018 San Fernando Valley Council of Governments Transportation Committee meeting as part of Metro’s NextGen Bus Study. This is a terrific idea and should also include a large parking structure. SOHA recommends that Metro pursue this concept and present possibilities at the next set of public meetings.

40. **New Comment in Revision 1** – For decades the airports were used only to service passengers and load and unload aircraft. Now they have become shopping centers since there are many available customers sitting around waiting for a plane with needs for services such as food, entertainment, reading material, and other travel related accessories. In the future there will likely be, as there are now in Japan, London, and other well-developed subway systems, shopping opportunities for passengers at underground stations where they can relax, rest, eat and partake of whatever is available. Metro should look ahead to those potential uses and think about providing areas where they might be integral with or adjacent to subway stations.

**Project Transparency**

41. **New Comment in Revision 1** – SOHA is concerned with the lack of transparency in Metro’s public comment process and the unavailability of important project documents to the public, and offers a simple and proven solution to improve transparency. In the current public comment process, individuals and organizations submit their comments to a blind email or mailing address but receive no acknowledgement or confirmation that the comments were received. Metro does not provide public access to comments, so the public has no way of knowing if others have similar comments or concerns, nor any ability to assess how many related comments have been submitted. The process seems designed to keep the public in the dark about who is commenting and what they are saying. In addition, it is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain Metro documents, such as critical analyses or drawings, unless these finally appear as part of a public summary presentation or an Environmental Impact Report – when the information is too little and too late to do the public much good.

We feel that improving transparency would be a positive step for Metro and offer a solution that Metro should apply to all projects. Metro’s website already has web pages for each Metro project and these should be enhanced to include a file management system for public comments and important documents. The Los Angeles City Council has been operating such a system for years – the Council File Management System (https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/). The searchable system posts public comments, public speaker cards, public statements, important documents, and other relevant information on every LA City Council action. Submitted public comments are posted to the system within 24 hours of receipt. This allows individuals and organizations to ensure that their
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comments have been received and recognized, and to take corrective action if they have not. The system also facilitates cross-pollination of comments and identification of other individuals and organizations with related concerns. Not having such a transparent public comment process discourages the public and can hint that Metro does not truly value public opinion. SOHA recommends that Metro immediately establish web pages for accessing all public comments and important project documents for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project, with similar pages for all Metro projects. This is a win-win solution for Metro and the public.

Thank you. If you have questions or would like to discuss our comments, please contact me at BobHillsideOrdinance@roadrunner.com or 213-364-7470.

Sincerely,

Bob Anderson, MS, PE (NU 474)  
Chair, Transportation Committee  
Board Member  
Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association

Marshall Long, PhD, PE (M 18759)  
Chair, Planning and Land Use Committee  
Board Member  
Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association

cc: Karen Swift (Metro), Frank Ching (Metro), Mayor Eric Garcetti, Councilmember David Ryu (CD4), Justin Orenstein (CD4 office), Councilmember Paul Krekorian (CD2), Doug Mensman (CD2 office), Councilmember Bob Blumenfeld (CD3), John Popoch (CD3 office), Senator Bob Hertzberg, Steve Fukushima (senator’s office), Assemblyman Adrin Nazarian, Emma Taylor (assemblyman’s office), Congressman Brad Sherman, John Alford (congressman’s office), Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, Nicole Englund (supervisor’s office), San Fernando Valley Council of Governments (SFVCOG), Ron Ziff (SONC), Avo Babian (SONC), Jeff Kalban (SONC)
MRT 2
An Affordable Alternative
Valley-to-LAX Monorail Route Through the Sepulveda Pass

Because Metro Cannot Afford Any of Their Four Concepts With Currently Available Measure M Funding

Government and Community Affairs Committee
Sherman Oaks Chamber of Commerce
April 25, 2019

Bob Anderson
Board Member and Chair, Transportation Committee
BobHillsideOrdinance@roadrunner.com

Jeffrey Kalban
Board Member and Chair, PLUM Committee
jeff.kalban.sonc@gmail.com

Sherman Oaks
Homeowners Association

Sherman Oaks
Neighborhood Council
Metro’s Four Concepts

HRT 1 🎉
Heavy Rail Fully Underground

HRT 2 🎉
Heavy Rail Fully Underground

HRT 3 😞
Heavy Rail Valley Elevated

MRT 1 😞
Monorail Pass & Valley Elevated
Sepulveda Pass Funding Dilemma

- **SOHA and SONC strongly support HRT 1 and HRT 2**
  - Both fully underground heavy rail in Valley and Westside
  - Highest capacity, shortest travel times, and least invasive
  - **Not affordable** under available Measure M funding

- **SOHA and SONC vehemently oppose HRT 3 – Not Viable**
  - Heavy rail elevated above Sepulveda Boulevard in Valley
  - Inequitable – Aerial in Valley – Underground on Westside
  - **Not affordable** under available Measure M funding

- **SOHA and SONC vehemently oppose MRT 1 – Not Viable**
  - Monorail elevated in Pass and above Sepulveda Boulevard in Valley
  - Inequitable – Aerial in Valley – Underground on Westside
  - **Not affordable** under available Measure M funding

**QUESTION – Why Is Valley Getting Short End of the Stick Again?**
**We All Need Equitable and Affordable Alternative**
Why HRT 3 and MRT 1 Aren’t Viable

- Both operate aerial 20 feet above Sepulveda Boulevard for five miles – Valley Vista to Raymer
- MRT 1 operates aerial or at-grade through Pass
- Both encroach on residents and businesses
- Both demolish about 100 homes in Sherman Oaks
- Both destroy community’s light, air, and privacy
- Both eliminate lanes on Sepulveda Boulevard and increase traffic congestion
- Both reduce street parking on Sepulveda Boulevard
- Both stress 96-inch water main under Sepulveda
- Both construction nightmares for years and years
- Both high potential for legal battles and delays
- Both inequitably underground on the Westside
- Both are high cost and long schedule because of underground Westside tunnels and stations
HRT 3 – Aerial on Sepulveda in Valley

Runs Aerial Above Sepulveda Boulevard for 5 miles

Transition from Underground to Aerial

HRT 3 Transitions from Underground to Aerial near Valley Vista Boulevard

- Aerial on Sepulveda Boulevard
- Transition from underground to aerial
HRT 3 – Very Intrusive Valley Operation

HRT 3 Traveling Northbound on Sepulveda Boulevard Just North of 101 Freeway

Aerial More Than 5 miles on Sepulveda Boulevard in Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys

This Property Has Been Sold and Multi-Family Development Expected
MRT 1 – Aerial on Sepulveda in Valley

- Runs Along 405 West Shoulder Through Pass
- Runs Aerial Above Sepulveda Boulevard
- Crosses 405 Near Valley Vista Boulevard
- Continues Aerial 5 miles to Van Nuys Metrolink

Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association - Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council
MRT 1 – Intrusive Valley Operation

MRT 1 Traveling Northbound Above Sepulveda Boulevard Near Valley Vista Boulevard

Aerial Above Sepulveda Boulevard for 5 miles in Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys
Sepulveda at Morrison Looking East

Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association - Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council
Sepulveda at Morrison Looking East

With HRT 3
Sepulveda at Ventura Looking South
Sepulveda at Ventura Looking South

With HRT 3
Ventura at Sepulveda Looking East
Sepulveda at Greenleaf Looking West
Sepulveda at Sutton Looking South

More Than 100 Apartments and Condos Demolished To Allow HRT 3 To Go Underground

With HRT 3
Measure M Funding Is Not Enough

Measure M Funding for Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project (in $2015 billions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metro Subregion</th>
<th>Measure M Funding</th>
<th>Local, State, Federal, &amp; Other Funding</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Fernando Valley</td>
<td>$1.270</td>
<td>$1.567</td>
<td>$2.837</td>
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<tr>
<td>Westside</td>
<td>$1.270</td>
<td>$1.567</td>
<td>$2.837</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL (Phase 2)</td>
<td>$2.540</td>
<td>$3.134</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Average U.S. inflation rate of 3.4 percent per year optimistically applied over four years

At Most $6.5 billion Currently Available from Measure M ($2019)
HRT 1 and 2 Cost Per Mile Is High

- Metro Purple Line Extension is best for cost comparison
  - Ongoing heavy rail subway construction under Wilshire Boulevard
  - 9.07 miles (3 sections), 7 stations, and maintenance facility upgrade
  - 14 years to construct (10 years first 4-mile section)
  - $9.35 billion forecast cost (per Metro Program Management Dashboard)
  - $1.03 billion per mile ($1.43 billion per mile for last section)

- HRT 1 and 2 same heavy rail subway but fewer stations
  - 14 miles, 6 or 7 stations, and new maintenance facility
  - $1.0 billion per mile lowest supported by Metro data

- Lowest to highest possible HRT 1 and 2 construction cost
  - 14 miles at $1.0 billion per mile = $14.0 billion – Possible
  - 14 miles at $1.2 billion per mile = $16.8 billion – Probable
  - 14 miles at $1.4 billion per mile = $19.6 billion – Pessimistic

HRT 1 and 2 Will Cost $14+ billion and Take 10 years – Probably More
Metro’s Severe Funding Gap

- Measure M provides at most $6.5 billion ($2019)
  - 28x28 Olympics initiative $8.6 billion not available because NONE of Metro concepts can meet 2028 deadline
  - Congestion pricing and mobility fees insufficient to fill gap
- Concepts HRT 1 and HRT 2 cost $14 to $17 billion
  - Not affordable – 14 to 15 miles of tunneling
- Concept HRT 3 costs $10 to $14 billion
  - Not affordable – 9 miles of costly tunneling in Westside and Pass
- Concept MRT 1 costs $8 to $12 billion
  - Not affordable – 6 miles of costly tunneling in Westside

QUESTION – Why Is Metro Spending Taxpayer Dollars To Study Four Obviously Unaffordable Concepts?

Huge Funding Gaps May Force Metro to Select Downgraded Concept
Public Perceives As Bait & Switch – Like East Valley Transit Corridor
Affordable P3 Concepts Possible

- Metro also soliciting Public-Private Partnership (P3) concepts for Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project
  - Through Request for Qualifications/Proposals (RFQ/P) in 2019 leading to Preliminary Development Agreement (PDA) in 2020

- Commercial organizations propose innovative concepts
  - Combined rail-auto tunnels?
  - Alternative monorail routes?
  - Other?

- Metro Board selects concept(s) in December 2019 to continue through environmental analyses
  - Selected P3 concepts evaluated alongside selected Metro concepts

QUESTION – Can Metro Please Explain Their P3 Plan?
Public-Private Partnership Proposals from Commercial Organizations May Offer Additional Innovative and Affordable Concepts
Meet MRT 2 – A Monorail on the I-405

- Futuristic look and appeal
- Aerial above 405 freeway median
- Dual tracks on streamlined single support structure
- Similar stations to Metro’s MRT 1
- Equitably elevated in Valley, Westside, and LAX regions
- Almost zero impacts to communities and streets – Even during construction
- Minimal potential for legal actions
- Shortest schedule – No tunneling
- Possibility of Valley to LAX by 2028
- Lowest cost – $6 to $7 billion to LAX

QUESTION – Why Doesn’t Metro Adopt MRT 2?
Why MRT 2 Happened and Is Viable

- February 2\textsuperscript{nd} – Metro discloses four concepts at public meeting
- February 7\textsuperscript{th} – Jeff Kalban (SONC) and Bob Anderson (SOHA) worry about affordability and think about better concept
- February 18\textsuperscript{th} – Bob and Jeff work together on President’s Day to develop alternative monorail concept on 405
- February 28\textsuperscript{th} – SOHA and SONC present MRT 2 concept to Councilmember Ryu and Council Districts 3, 4, and 6 staff
- March 8\textsuperscript{th} – BYD SkyRail learns of MRT 2 concept – contacts us
- March 11\textsuperscript{th} – SONC Board approves MRT 2 concept
- March 12\textsuperscript{th} – Jeff and Bob meet with BYD SkyRail to learn about their “remarkably similar” affordable and viable monorail concept on 405
- March 12\textsuperscript{th} – Jeff and Bob start presenting MRT 2 widely – Supervisor Kuehl’s office, Metro Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Manager & staff, Mayor Garcetti’s staff, Metro Chief Innovation Officer, Senator Hertzberg office, Village at Sherman Oaks Business Improvement District, Sherman Oaks Chamber of Commerce, and more …
MRT 2 – Minimal Community Impact

- Dual-track monorail on single support operates above freeway median in both directions
- No interference with freeway traffic
- Quiet operation with rubber tires on concrete track
- Easy & safe emergency evacuation path between tracks
Easy Ride Over Sepulveda Pass To LAX

- MRT 2 travels under Mulholland Bridge
- Travels over smaller bridges and overpasses
  - Skirball and Sunset Bridges, and Burbank Boulevard Overpass
- Travels over or around major freeway interchanges
  - Ventura (101), Santa Monica (10), and Marina (90) freeways
MRT 2 Van Nuys Metrolink Station

- Northern terminus at Van Nuys Metrolink station – Easy connection
- Runs aerial and parallel to Metrolink tracks before turning above I-405 freeway median
- Additional parking for east Valley possible at station
MRT 2 Sherman Way Parking Station

- Major driver access from north Valley, North County, Metrolink, and more
- Huge 10,000-car parking structure at Sherman Way with easy access to/from 405 freeway
- Station inside parking structure on dogleg track
MRT 2 Orange Line Parking Station

- Major driver access from north Valley, south Valley, Orange Line, and more
- Large parking structure on existing Orange Line parking lot with easy access to/from Sepulveda Boulevard
- Station inside parking structure on dogleg track
- People mover to Orange Line station
MRT 2 Ventura Blvd Parking Station

- Station adjacent to freeway on dogleg track with people mover to parking
- Easy access to Sepulveda and Ventura Boulevard transit
- Station could be closer to Ventura Boulevard if desirable – Or even above 405
MRT 2 Wilshire/UCLA Station

- Easy access to/from 405 freeway, Wilshire Boulevard, and UCLA
- Large UCLA on-campus parking structure with station on dogleg track
- People mover onto UCLA campus
- Direct connection to Purple Line on Wilshire Boulevard
MRT 2 Expo Line Station

- Direct connection to Expo Line for either Santa Monica or downtown Los Angeles
- Station adjacent to 405 and 10 freeways on dogleg track
- Continues south to LAX terminus station and connections to Green Line, Crenshaw Line, and LAX Automated People Mover
Monorail As Good As Heavy Rail

- Metro heavy rail performance estimates – HRT 1, 2, & 3
  - Six-car trains traveling up to 70 mph
  - 12,000 passengers per hour with four minutes between trains
  - 15 to 16 minutes from Van Nuys Metrolink to Expo Line

- Metro performance for their monorail – MRT 1
  - Three-car trains traveling up to 50 mph
  - 7,500 passengers per hour with four minutes between trains
  - 26 minutes from Van Nuys Metrolink to Expo Line

- State-of-the-art monorail performance – MRT 2
  - Six-car trains traveling up to 75 mph
  - 14,000 passengers per hour with two minutes between trains
  - 20 minutes from Van Nuys Metrolink to Expo Line

**QUESTION – Why Does Metro Degrade Monorail Performance Compared To Heavy Rail?**

**Equitable, Quickest To Build, and Most Affordable**
Ensure Toll Lanes Don’t Preclude MRT 2

- Metro adding two Toll ExpressLanes to 405 freeway
  - Measure M Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Phase 1
  - One toll lane in each direction from 10 freeway to 101 freeway

- ExpressLanes must not preclude MRT 2 monorail above 405 median through Sepulveda Pass
  - One part of Metro says ExpressLanes preclude MRT 2
  - Another part of Metro says ExpressLanes compatible with MRT 2

- Metro must ensure toll lanes and MRT 2 work together
  - Stop considering unacceptable elevated tracks above Sepulveda Boulevard in Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys

**QUESTION – Why Preclude Longer, Quickest-To-Build, Actually Affordable, MRT 2 Median-Running Monorail Route for Toll Lanes?**

**Metro Must Simply Ensure Toll Lanes and Monorail Can Work Together on 405**
MRT 2 Monorail – A Better Alternative

• Heavy Rail Subways HRT 1 and 2 Are Terrific But Unaffordable

• HRT 3 and MRT 1 Are Inequitable To Valley, Unaffordable, and Destroy Van Nuys and Sherman Oaks

• MRT 2 Monorail Above 405 Median Is Only Affordable and Equitable Concept Operating by ‘28 Olympics

• Let’s Make MRT 2 a Reality!
Please send comments to Metro about the Sepulveda Transit corridor Project

- Oppose elevated tracks in Valley (Metro HRT 3 and MRT 1)
- Support for MRT 2-type monorail above 405 freeway
- Other?

Email comments to:
- sepulvedatransit@metro.net
- Cory Zelmer, Metro Project Manager, zelmerc@metro.net
- Joshua Schank, Metro Chief Innovation Officer, schankj@metro.net

Mail comments to:
- Cory Zelmer, Metro Project Manager
  Metro, One Gateway Plaza, M/S 99-22-5, Los Angeles, CA, 90012

Thank you
1 October 2019

Mr Cory Zelmer, Project Manager
Metro
One Gateway Plaza, M/S 99-22-5
Los Angeles, Ca 90012

Dear Mr. Zelmer

As a resident of Bel Air Crest, a community of 286 homes in the Sepulveda Pass, I/we feel it very important that you understand and hear the concerns we have regarding the Proposed Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project. While we appreciate the value that the proposed effective high-capacity rapid transit will bring to Los Angeles, this project impacts the numerous communities, schools, and institutions as well as the movement of thousands who utilize the Sepulveda Pass Corridor. The only ingress and egress to our community is on Sepulveda Blvd in the middle of the Sepulveda Pass, south of Mulholland and north of the Getty on/off I-405 ramps.

I/we object to any rapid transit option that will not only impact my ingress and/or egress into my home & community but would impact the health & safety of the entire community and the Sepulveda Pass Corridor with its many pipelines, including those that carry natural gas, petroleum, large water lines, electrical cable lines, and more reaching to a depth of 40 feet below Sepulveda.

Parking is also a major consideration for us. We are recommending that parking structures be located on streets that do not serve as traffic corridors. I/we are also concerned about the budget.

Please keep us informed, and add my email to your response list so I/we can be kept apprised of updates.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cordially,

Renee Cherniak - name
Mr Cory Zelmer  
METRO  
One Gateway Plaza, Mailstop 99-22-5  
Los Angeles CA 90012

Dear Mr Zelmer,

I would like to submit the following comments on the proposed Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project:

1) This is permanent infrastructure that will remain in service for hundreds of years. We must therefore spend the money to do it right the first time rather than trying to save a few bucks here and there by cutting corners. We can’t add the missing stations later.

2) This is a transit line, not a commuter rail line. Most riders will be traveling between intermediate stops, not end to end. Stations must therefore be close enough together that all origin and destination points within the corridor are no more then a half mile of a station; otherwise, people will not use it.

3) I generally prefer the HR-1, Van Nuys Blvd alignment north of Expo and the Sepulveda Blvd. alignment south to LAX, with two modifications: The Ventura Blvd. should be at Sepulveda Blvd. in order to serve the Sherman Oaks Galleria (a major shopping and entertainment center), and near-by office towers, and the LAX station must be in the central terminal area, as travelers are not going to make multiple transfers while schlepping their baggage (I tried this in New York from JFK to Brooklyn, it was not fun).

4) When we study the most heavily used HRT systems around the world, we find that their stations are 1/3 to 1/2 mile apart but never more than a mile unless crossing a body of water or a mountain. I therefore recommend the following station station locations:
   a) Van Nuys Metrolink station
   b) Vanowen street
   c) Van Nuys Civic Center/ Orange Line; the civic center, with federal, state and local government offices, the courthouse and a regional library branch is a major destination. There is also a lot of commercial land and surface parking lots near-by that can be redeveloped into higher density mixed-use
   d) Burbank Blvd.; splits the distance between Orange Line and Ventura Blvd. has redevelopment potential.
   e) Ventura Blvd. at Sepulveda Blvd; See comment #3 above.
   f) UCLA Pauley Pavilion/ Ackerman Union area; This is the heart of the UCLA campus and will be one of the busiest stations in the METRO system.
   g) Santa Monica Blvd. (north or south of the fault zone); Office towers and other commercial destinations.
   h) Olympic/ Sepulveda; Retail and offices, a major destination.
   i) Sepulveda between Pico and the Expo line; There is a major new mixed-use development under construction here and potential for more to come.
j) National Blvd./Sepulveda; Lots of one story commercial buildings with huge surface parking lots waiting to be replaced with retail-residential mixed-use, plus, existing residential density on Sepulveda north and south of the station.
k) Palms/ Sepulveda; Same as National Blvd.
l) Venice Blvd./Sepulveda; Has some development potential plus existing residential density.
m) Westfield Culver City Mall; Need I say more?
n) Sawtelle / Sepulveda; Large old shopping center with surface parking can be replaced with high density housing on top of new shopping center and underground parking. Also, Target within walking distance.
o) Manchester/ Sepulveda; Large one story commercial center with huge parking lot can be replaced with housing on retail.
p) LAX CTA; (see comment #3 above) This station must be designed to allow for extension into the South Bay job centers.

I apologize for not getting these comments in to you months sooner, but I have been tied up with family matters and work obligations.

sincerely,

Charles A. Adelman
05/09/19

Dear Metro Planning Department:

Your past article in The L.A. Times regarding a plan to tunnel through the Sepulveda Pass, motivated this communication.

I was born in 1952 and raised in the city of Los Angeles. I am a UCLA graduate and currently live and work in Santa Monica. Over the years, I have witnessed the growth of L.A., in what seems like exponential proportions, particularly the west side. On any given weekday, between 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. on Wilshire Blvd., between 20th Street in Santa Monica and the 405 Freeway, the driving time is 45 minutes. This is a distance of about 2.5 miles that, under normal traffic conditions should take about 7-8 minutes minutes. I can walk it faster during rush hour.

There are many other areas around Los Angeles with similar gridlock conditions, including the Beverly Center area, the 101 across the San Fernando Valley and the stretch of the 405 between Valencia and LAX.

The Subway to the Sea (extension of the Purple line) is a total misnomer, as the line is scheduled to end at the Veteran’s Hospital in W.L.A., not the ocean and therefore, doesn’t address the Westside gridlock, earlier described. Moreover, in the time it takes to construct a subway for 12 more miles, the influx of people and cars in L.A. will be overwhelming, let alone the exorbitant expense of this method. Heaven help us if someone can’t be rushed to U.C.L.A. Medical Center or Cedars Sinai in time, due to impassable roadways.

Now that we’ve waited so many years to finally address mass transit in L.A., prices have soared; the city streets can no longer accommodate the traffic, earning Los Angeles the current title of the city with the worst traffic in the country.

In the interest of time and expense, I am asking you to consider a mode that has been suggested many times in the past but derailed (no pun intended), due to political pressure from lobbyists that supported the agendas of previous administrations, as well as others who simply only consider their own personal taste, as opposed the big picture of the city of Los Angeles. I am speaking of elevated monorail.
The two lines I am suggesting that are most needed, will help ventilate the city on the north-south & east-west arteries, at 1/3 the cost of a subway. This would be a much quicker method of construction and having stations and trains elevated in view, would be less prone to crime and earthquake injuries than a subway.

(continued)

Other metropolises around the globe have monorail with proven success, such as Australia, China, Japan, Germany, etc. Now, Monorail is the future. They even have switch tracks for Monorail. It could even be a new icon for L.A.! Los Angeles should be a leader in modern transportation. We have the square miles to demonstrate the ability of a full scale Monorail system. Los Angeles is also blessed with beautiful weather 95%+ days of the year. Why would anyone want to be underground when you can see the beauty of our city from an attractive, elevated monorail system. It would serve as a great promotional tool for convention and tourism as well. If people knew they could get to the west side quickly and safely, they would be more likely to book conventions while lodging downtown. In regards to environmental impact, unlike dual, steel rail, Monorail is also quiet and being elevated, doesn’t interfere with subterranean gas lines or, with surface traffic, that delays travel times, as well as leads to accidents, such as the Orange bus line does. (B.T.W., The Orange Line was supposed to be temporary as it is actually a rail right-of-way). When is that going to be converted?

One of the most obvious errors in current light rail construction is reflected in the Expo line that runs across several intersections at grade level. It also stops at traffic lights downtown L.A., which seriously delays transit time. It essentially converts from a Light Rail line BART, which operates brilliantly in the Bay area, never intersects with street traffic and has proven to be enormously successful. The most important benefit and leverage of converting Angelinos to using mass transit is the travel time. That’s how you get people out of their cars and off the streets and freeways. Having rail transit on grade level, adding HOV lanes and bus lanes defeats the purpose.

Case and point, the grossly expensive project, of widening the 405 has proven to be a failure. Current studies have proven that travel speeds are actually slower and travel time from the valley to the city takes a few minutes longer than it did before we spent the $1.1 billion to widen the freeway for the sole purpose of adding HOV
lanes. Adding HOV lanes is like putting up a roadside billboard that invites everyone come join us on the freeway because we’ve added another lane for you. This couldn’t be a more incorrect strategy. The only way to relieve congestion is to train the public to leave their cars at home and use mass transit whenever possible. They won’t do this until the transportation proves it can deliver them to the busiest areas in town at a dramatically reduced travel time.

Also, all rail lines should connect with each other without fail. That’s what makes a successful system. For example, it is unconscionable that the Green Line doesn’t connect with Metrolink in Norwalk. I believe the respective stations are 2 miles apart. Of course, it is equally ridiculous that the Green Line doesn’t end at LAX.

(continued)

It sure would be nice if S.F. Valley residents had a light rail starting in Chatsworth at the Amtrak station, going south to Warner Center in Woodland Hills and then eastbound across the valley to Universal City, connecting to the Red Line, in stead of the Orange (bus) Line. Trains hold more people than buses and the connection to the Red Line would be direct and seamless.

In regards to the Sepulveda Pass initiative, my proposed north-south Monorail line would not only reduce the traffic from the valley to the city, it would serve our outlying suburbs and connect other types of rail in the system as well as LAX. This will benefit our city in so many ways, while providing a new, modern image for the city to attract more visitors without causing gridlock in the process.

Attached, please find a complete study including a detailed explanation of the benefits of elevated Monorail as well as my proposed station and route maps for both the North-South & East-West lines. The routes are critical to the concept. The current Expo line, does not aid west-side residents who live west of the 405 and need to travel to Hollywood, mid-city or a venue like Dodger Stadium. Santa Monica residents have no connection to the Purple Line because it (The Subway To The Sea) doesn’t serve west of the Veteran’s Hospital, which is in West L.A., not Santa Monica, where all the traffic congestion is. Moreover, there are no plans to connect the Expo line to the Purple line until the Sepulveda Corridor project is
decided. Implementing elevated Monorail would save 100’s of millions of dollars in construction costs and accomplish the project in 1/3 the time with a more attractive, quieter mode of transportation. You could accomplish more lines in less time within the same budget.

I look forward to continuing our discussion. I would be happy to meet with any of your team in person to brainstorm further.

Sincerely,

Leonard Neil
L.A. Rail System History

The old SPRR right-of-way along the west side of Sepulveda branching north was the old PE Ry, that headed north to Santa Monica Blvd. and turned east along SM Blvd. to BH and West Hollywood (there was no Century City, only the back lots of 20th Century studios).

The line never turned south off of the present Expo right-of-way toward south bay cities. In fact that now-abandoned stretch was the "missing-link" portion of the old Hollywood red car route along SM in BH running in the street to Fairfax/SM Blvd. junction then turning northeast at a 45-degree angle to Hollywood Blvd. and La Brea via private right-of-way (behind people's houses!).

I say missing link, because the West Hollywood link to downtown LA was severed in 1953 with the abandonment of the Easterly Santa Monica Blvd. line running east along SM Blvd. and then to a Junction with East Sunset to Glendale Blvd. (Silver Lake Area) passing Echo Park and down into the Subway Terminal building at 4th and Hill Sts. (now the building houses condos and apts.).

Because the line was cut-off from its downtown route along easterly SM Blvd., the westerly "loop" portion (Sepulveda/SM Blvd. alignment) became the only access to the Expo line and rest of the PE system. The old, original Expo was known by the name of "Santa Monica Air Line" due to its "straight-as-the-crow-flies" alignment between downtown LA and the city of Santa Monica.

The critical "link" I refer to, connected the west side Hollywood routes to the major red car storage and repair facility at SM Blvd. and San Vicente know as "Sherman Yard". Sherman Yard is now occupied by the "Design Center" building (AKA the "Blue Whale") and the MTA bus yard.

In any event, the majority of that old right-of-way shown on the map is now covered over with new commercial buildings and totally obliterated north of Pico.

If you wish to see a remnant of the old Hollywood line, drive to the corner of Sunset Blvd. and Gardner St. in West Hollywood. This intersection was known as "Gardner Junction". You can still see how the present old commercial buildings facing both streets are "cut" at a 45-degree angle describing a triangular floor plan adjacent to the old right-of-way alignment. It appears as some weird out-of-place alley that is now used for parking; typical L.A. un-planned remnant. That may be the reason folks say: "most attractive American cities were laid-out; L.A. was THROWN OUT!"
MONORAILS...THEY'RE NOT JUST FOR THEME PARKS AND ZOOS!

**MONORAILS are proven.** Each and every day hundreds of thousands of passengers are carried on monorails. Many of the world's transit monorails exist in Japan, eight of which are full-scale urban transit systems. Others exist in Australia, Malaysia, Europe, Russia and in the United States. Several more are either under construction or in advanced planning. Surprisingly, Walt Disney World's Monorail System near Orlando, Florida, has one of the highest riderships of all monorails. Well over 100,000 passenger trips are recorded each day on the 14 miles of beamways (*a far higher ridership than most USA light rail systems*). Nothing "Mickey Mouse" about that! The system is there to move people between six stations, not just amuse them.

**MONORAILS are safe.** Whether they are of the straddle-beam or suspended variety, modern monorail technology makes derailment virtually impossible. As monorail is elevated, accidents with surface traffic are impossible. Zero accidents with pedestrians or surface traffic translates to no system down time, less liability suits and most importantly, a safer public. Street rail systems with grade crossings (light rail, trams or trollies) can't approach this level of safety, as any study of accident history will show.

**MONORAILS are environment friendly.** Since most are electrically powered, monorails are non-polluting. In 2007, the Las Vegas Monorail aided in the annual removal of an estimated 3.2 million vehicle miles from Southern Nevada’s major roadways and reduced emissions by more than 58 tons of carbon monoxide (CO), volatile organic compounds (VOC) and nitrogen oxides (NOx) over the course of the year. Most monorails run on rubber tires and are very quiet. Monorails are the most aesthetically pleasing of all elevated rail systems. Their sleek design blends in with modern urban environments. Quick construction time results in less disruption to the surrounding environments, whether business or residential.

**MONORAILS are cost effective.** The Tokyo-Haneda Monorail has been operating since 1964. This eight-mile dual-beam system is privately owned and **TURNS A PROFIT** each year. The Seattle Center Monorail, built in 1962 for the Century 21 exposition, is run by a private corporation. In return for the concession to operate the one-mile line, the corporation pays the city $75,000 every year. What private business would take on a contract like this unless profits were guaranteed? Profit is indeed an oddity in the transit world, as most transit technologies require enormous subsidies from taxpayers. Building monorail does...
not guarantee profit, but operating costs are almost always less.

**MONORAILS are receiving serious attention from transit planners.**

Houston Metro selected monorail for its city rail system, only to be cancelled later by the city's mayor. Jacksonville built a peoplemover-scale monorail in its downtown. Newark International Airport opened a monorail system between terminals and parking lots in 1995, and in 2001 it was extended to a new Amtrak station that serves trains on the Northeast Corridor. In 2003, Kuala Lumpur opened a spectacular monorail, connecting hot spots throughout the Malaysian city. Okinawa has the newest monorail in Japan, which also opened in 2003. In 2004 Las Vegas opened a four-mile leg of what could become a city-wide monorail system. New systems are in advanced planning or construction in several areas of the world. The Monorail Society keeps members and anyone interested informed with updates on our [News Briefs](#) page.

**MONORAILS are popular with people / taxpayers.** Voters have demonstrated their preference for monorail more than once. In Los Angeles, they voted five to one in favor of monorail in a referendum. LA transit officials ignored them and continued to build light rail and subways. In November of 1997, approximately 93,000 Seattle voters said yes to a grass roots-produced initiative for a 40-mile citywide monorail system. A subsequent Seattle ballot initiative to tax automobile owners for a starter line in 2002 passed as well. Although voters supported the monorail on four separate ballots, a controversy over debt financing and lack of City Hall support in 2005 resulted in the cancellation of the project. Monorails still remain popular with people and more will be built in coming years!

**So if monorails are so great, why aren't there more of them?**

An excellent question! A multitude of reasons can explain why you don't see as many monorails as you see of other transit systems.

- "There aren't any transit monorails, we shouldn't build something that hasn't been proven." It's a ludicrous reason, but it sticks for some reason. This is despite the fact that there are dozens of successful transit monorails around the world. New monorails are being built too, even as you read this.
- Monorails are perceived as new, experimental and untried. Not enough people are aware of the many transit monorails in operation today along with their proven track record.
- Something some transportation experts have whispered to us over the years is that **a lot more people can make a lot more money if light rail or subway is built.** The conventional rail industry has established a stronghold and monorail is often discouraged by consultants. Paranoid you say? If you study the subject long enough, the pattern becomes clear. Familiar large firms recite the same untruths about monorail in city after city when rail is being studied for implementation, and they eliminate monorail in the early stages of planning. This is slowly changing though, major monorail systems being planned and built in several cities and their success will dispel any misconceptions about monorail. Members of The Monorail Society are not letting lies be accepted anymore.
- Most manufacturers of monorails build all kinds of rail systems besides their monorail product. If your
city wants a more expensive technology than monorail or if their consultant steers them in another direction, manufacturers are all-too-happy to oblige by selling them something more expensive.

Here at The Monorail Society, we'll continue to point out the advantages of monorail. Our front lines for informing people about monorail are the members of The Monorail Society. They spread the word in their own communities through the World Campaign and by using DVDs purchased from our Monorail Store. Our website helps educate those who are interested on the subject. The future is returning, monorails are here to stay!

What is a Monorail? Basics page two
February 5th, 2019

SEPULVEDA TRANSIT CORRIDOR STUDY AREA COMMENTS
(Follow up from tonight's public meeting)

NORTH END COMMENTS (Sylmar- Van Nuys- Ventura Blvd)

Option HRT 3 is the best option over my second choice of HRT 2. Only couple minutes longer running time, yet much larger ridership. Pulls ridership from 4 stations on the SF valley side of the line, of which 3 will clearly have to have a lot of parking. Ventura Blvd station may be harder to get lots of parking in, but then make sure your transfers from Metro Rapid and Local buses on Ventura Blvd are well designed. Good transfers also from Amtrak, [Even Amtrak Thru Way Buses from Bakersfield], Metrolink, Orange Line from Chatsworth and technically, Orange line from the North Hollywood direction, as well as obviously the ESFV line from Sylmar (with another Metrolink connection and possibly California HSR).

Note, the ESFV line is potentially underground in the Van Nuys area, especially under the Union Pacific tracks at the Amtrak/Metrolink Station. SO if your subway is elevated at this location, you are really going to have to make sure you design EASY transfers to all 3 levels- Elevated Subway, at grade Metrolink/Amtrak and underground light rail. You are also going to really have to expand the parking at this location with all of this going on here.

Another concern or important comment. If and when the Orange Line goes light line light, I would suggest that a connection be built where the ESFV line hits the Orange Line at Van Nuys Blvd in order to allow running of 2 through sets of trains—
>Chatsworth- Van Nuys- North Hollywood (And hopefully to Burbank one day)
>Sylmar- Van Nuys- North Hollywood (and hopefully Burbank one day)

By doing this, you have BOTH of your SFV light rail lines serving BOTH of your northern terminus of BOTH your subway lines. Excellent feeding into the high capacity subway. (Diagramed below)
Don’t go with HRT1, building under your recently built ESFV line is a duplicate effort and a waste of limited funds, it does not increase your capture area for ridership and would probably have some building issues. This route would also lack the parking your other options have other than the already busy Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak station.

Also don’t go with MRT/MRT 4. Regardless of whether its a Paris or Montreal style rubber wheel subway, Disneyland style or even a Vancouver Sky Train Style, you are introducing yet another different set of equipment into the overall system. Stick with steel wheel subway (more please) and steel wheel light rail.

Other than these ideas, I feel the NORTH section of the project looks good

SOUTH END COMMENTS (Sepulveda Pass area to LAX)

Agree the transfer point to Purple has to be the Wilshire/Westwood station. A classic 4 way station providing (N/S/E/W) transfers.

Glad to here UCLA is working with you towards a stop. I originally felt if it were on the north end by Sunset Blvd, you could also get some E/W transfers off the Rapid and Local Metro buses on Sunset and use UCLA shuttle to serve campus. But if they are willing to find a station location IN campus, that would be better.

I like the Sepulveda Blvd option south of Expo. Shortest option and nice spread of stops. Venice Blvd is better than Washington as “some day” some type of line my come down Venice. I suggest that a Fox Hills stop be a little further north at Sepulveda and Slauson so the spread of stops would allow you to have a stop at Sepulveda and Howard Hughes. I think this stop could also serve Playa Vista with some type of shuttle. Basically, eliminate the Washington stop and use Venice and by not having a Washington stop, add Howard Hughes. Stop at Manchester and Sepulveda also a good choice.

I would also suggest one more stop. As this line comes down Sepulveda and turns east to get to 96th station, I suggest putting a stop at the Intermodal Station on the people mover one stop before 96th. Simple station, no mezzanine, single platform. My reason is people coming from the north can transfer here to the people mover or maybe check in here (if planned), rather than going to 96th and double backing. Also, I think 96th would be too busy if you dump the Sepulveda line passengers there- 96th is already going to have 3 light rail lines serving it, drop off locations and bus service. I think it will get too crowded. Passengers on the Sepulveda Line of course, can still continue to 96th if they need to transfer to any of the light rail lines to head east or south.
OTHER SOUTH END COMMENTS
(See attached map)

I was intrigued by the thought of the Sepulveda Line coming down Centinela, but Sepulveda simply is the better option just with the Fox Hills and Howard Hughes area stops alone.

But this got me thinking. If you were thinking of taking the Purple line west past the VA before heading south on Centinela, then consider this option. Take the Purple out Wilshire past the VA as has been proposed many times to Santa Monica. “Finish your Subway to the Sea”. Then, instead of a Bus Way down Lincoln, send the Purple Line down Lincoln and tie into the Sepulveda line at Manchester/Sepulveda before it heads into LAX/96th. I see LOTS of positives on this ==

1/ Serves Santa Monica, Venice, Marina Del Rey, Playa Del Rey, (gets near LMU), Otis College, Westchester and of course, LAX.

2/ I am sure you can dust off the Wilshire to Santa Monica and the Lincoln Blvd studies to save some time/money on studies.

3/ This creates 2 north - south high capacity rail lines on the Westside to complement your east west lines.

4/ Since its the Purple line, it would already be connected to your major repair yard in downtown LA. Yes, you still may need a night yard near LAX, but it would not have to be as large since once a set of Sepulveda Line equipment comes into 96th, it can go back out via the Purple Line and head up at the base. I would just have the LAX yard be large enough to hold the last arriving trains of the night and to clean. All major work should be done at Downtown LA.

5/ The spread of having lines going down Lincoln and Sepulveda would be better than a line going down Centinela and Sepulveda- expands your ridership capture areaa.
ADDITIONAL COMMENT BASED ON THE MAP IN RELATION TO THE CRENSHAW LINE. (PLEASE forward these comments to that team)

The Crenshaw Line getting from Expo to Red Line in Hollywood is very important to create another north/south line that will actually be in between the Blue and Sepulveda lines, that is until the Vermont Line comes to be.

I sent this comment to Metro separately already as an idea to get the Crenshaw Line done AND provide an option for West Hollywood without compromising the straight shot the Crenshaw line needs as it will be a very long and twisting line as it is.

So looking at my map, use some of the data that was done when the Purple Line was discussed going through West Hollywood going west along Santa Monica, then turning south on La Cienega to cross the Purple line at Wilshire. This gives West Hollywood connections at both Purple and Red.

This line is light rail running out of the same terminus the Crenshaw line will have at Hollywood /Highland. Build a 3 track- 2/3 platform station here and you can interline equipment.

South of La Cienega/Wilshire, line continues underground to a station at La Cienega/ Pico and heads south to Venice Blvd for an above ground station at La Cienega/ Venice. At this point, the line goes down the middle of Venice Blvd using the old right of way. Keeps costs in line as at grade, quad gates at all crossing, maybe eliminate some smaller crossings, gives a great chance to upgrade Venice Blvd all the way to the beach by taking down the power poles, standardized lighting, better sidewalks, changes to parking on street, size of street etc.

Your stations on this segment are=
Venice/Expo line
Venice/ Overland
Venice/ Sepulveda (connection to Sepulveda Line and another way to LAX)
Venice/Centinela
Venice/Lincoln (connection to Purple Line if it comes down Lincoln from SM)
Venice Beach

This line would cross or touch 5 lines, serve West Hollywood and provide another option to LAX

Thanks for reading all this. Questions on any of this, let me know
Three-dimensional model of proposed project design, presented by a stakeholder to Metro staff on June 18, 2018.