

Government Officials Comments and Responses

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RECORD #89 DETAIL

Status : Unread
Record Date : 9/27/2010
Submission Date : 9/27/2010
First Name : nanette
Last Name : cole
Group Affiliation : BH Planning Commission
Submission Content : Info you provided for tonight's webcast is not functioning...

Too bad. A lot of us who could not get there were looking forward to the webcast, per earlier notice. Site sources aren't helpful, either.

89-1

89-1

Metro apologizes for any technical difficulties encountered during the live webcast on September 27, 2010. The webcast was reposted and is now functioning. The webcast is available on the project website at: <http://www.metro.net/projects/westside>.

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October 18, 2010

David Meiger
Project Director
Los Angeles County Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza, MS 99/22/5
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Meiger,

I write to express my support for the extension of the existing Metro Purple Line and Metro Red Line heavy rail subway system west toward West Los Angeles and the City of Santa Monica. As you know, a substantial portion of the funding for the extension of the subway derives from Measure R, for which I wrote the enabling legislation. In addition, I am a strong supporter of the 30/10 Plan, which would expedite the building of this subway, among other regionally beneficial transit projects.

The corridor through which the subway would travel traverses my district. It already has some of the highest population and employment density in the region, which will grow by 3 million people in the next 30 years. With more cars on the road, travel speeds will continue to decline. Thus the primary benefit of the subway will be in travel time saved; instead of taking 54 minutes to travel from the Eastside of Los Angeles to Westwood, the trip will take only 25 minutes by subway. Given the choice of stewing in traffic congestion or whisking to one's destination, I believe the subway will be the obvious transit choice for many of my constituents who live and work in the subway study area.

I favor Alternative 2, the Westwood/VA Hospital Extension. Alternative 2 has funding identified in Metro's LRTP and Measure R. It would be the first rail transit project to reach the Westside since the Red Car ran down Venice Boulevard to the sea. This alternative would give veterans access to the care they need, students, faculty, staff and visitors access to UCLA, and residents west of the freeway access to points east – all without having to navigate freeway-related congestion in Westwood. Alternative 2 runs through an exceptionally dense part of Los Angeles, with several major job centers, and would provide thousands of commuters entering the area with improved access to and from the Westside.

The 42nd Assembly District includes all or parts of the city of Los Angeles, neighborhoods of Sherman Oaks, Studio City, North Hollywood, Valley Village, Valley Glen, Toluca Lake, Universal City, Griffith Park, West Los Angeles, Brentwood, Del Aire, Holmby Hills, Beverly Glen, Westwood, Century City, Hollywood, Fairfax, Hancock Park, Los Feliz, and the cities of Beverly Hills and West Hollywood.

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631-1

Your support for Alternative 2 (Westwood/VA Hospital Extension) has been noted. On October 28, 2010, the Metro Board of Directors identified Alternative 2 as the Locally Preferred Alternative. Only Alternatives 1 and 2 are affordable within the adopted Long Range Transportation Plan, and between them, Alternative 2 provides significantly higher ridership and better cost effectiveness. Additionally, Alternative 2 serves the VA Hospital and other communities west of the I-405 more effectively.

Please refer to Sections 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5 of the Final EIS/EIR for an overview of the development of alternatives and the LPA selection process.

631-1

631-2 | In addition to supporting Alternative 2, I would like to keep alive the prospect for a future rail connection through West Hollywood. While there is presently no funding for this leg of the subway extension, it is obvious that putting West Hollywood in reach of travelers from other parts of our region is important since that community is a regional destination. In addition, a West Hollywood spur would provide a logical path for Valley residents to reach the Westside. Should funding be identified, this part of my district and other commuters would benefit from increased access to Metro's regional transit system.

631-3 | Safety is my paramount concern in building and operating the Westside Subway Extension, and decisions about how and where to put the subway must be science-based. For these reasons, I urge Metro to carry forward into the FEIR two alignment options between Beverly Hills and Century City: one along Wilshire and Santa Monica Boulevards to Avenue of the Stars, and the other going down Wilshire and thereafter to Constellation Boulevard North and Avenue of the Stars. I am aware that many of my constituents in the City of Beverly Hills prefer the Wilshire/Santa Monica Boulevard/Avenue of the Stars alignment, which would not go under homes or businesses. I am also aware that Metro has learned that the Wilshire to Santa Monica Boulevard/Avenue of the Stars alignment would travel along an earthquake fault, and that the Wilshire/Constellation North alignment would simply cross the fault.

Carrying forward the two alignment options would allow Metro to conduct appropriately detailed seismic studies for both routes to determine which would present the lowest risk to passenger safety in the event of an earthquake. It would also allow further analysis of what, if any, impacts subway construction and operation would have on structures beneath which it would run.

In addition, assuming it can be built safely, I favor the East Connection alignment between Century City/Constellation North and Westwood/VA. This alignment would be the most cost-effective and efficient route.

I want to thank Metro staff and administration for their efforts to listen to the communities that would be affected by the Alternatives set forth in the DEIR, and for making changes throughout this process to address community concerns. The subway extension will be a complex undertaking, but I am optimistic that, by working together with all of the stakeholders, Metro can complete it in a manner that is sensitive to surrounding communities, timely and cost effective. We are building for the future with this project.

Sincerely,

Mike Feuer
Assemblymember, 42nd District

631-2

Your comment in support of the West Hollywood branch has been noted. There is not adequate funding available in Measure R or other sources to construct a rail connection through West Hollywood at this time. However, the Draft EIS/EIR showed that there is a market for transit improvements serving West Hollywood, and this corridor is included in the Strategic Element of the 2009 Long Range Transportation Plan. Should funding be identified and secured, further study could be done to identify a project that would be competitive under Federal funding criteria.

631-3

Your comment recommending further study of the two Century City Station locations and associated alignments has been noted. As part of the LPA selection, the Metro Board of Directors decided to continue to study both station location options in Century City (Santa Monica Boulevard and Constellation Boulevard) to address concerns raised by the community regarding locating a station directly on a seismic fault and the safety of tunneling under homes and schools. The Metro Board of Directors also decided to not include the Constellation South alignment between the Wilshire/Rodeo and Century City Stations as part of the LPA, but to continue to study the Constellation North and the Santa Monica Boulevard alignments. The Constellation South alignment passed beneath more residential properties than the Constellation North or Santa Monica Boulevard alignments. In addition, the Metro Board of Directors decided to not include the West or Central alignments between Century City and Westwood/UCLA as part of the LPA, but to continue to study the East alignment because the East alignment is the most direct and least expensive route between the two stations.

Safety, both during construction and eventual operations, is one of Metro's highest priorities and is one of the key evaluation criteria in selection of the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). In response to the Metro Board of Director's request for more information, further analysis was undertaken to focus on the engineering and environmental aspects of the two options during the preparation of the Final EIS/EIR to expand on the studies conducted in preparation of the Draft EIS/EIR. It should be noted that prior to conducting the comparative study, the Santa Monica Boulevard Station location was shifted slightly to the east from the location in the Draft EIS/EIR to avoid the Santa Monica Fault zone.

On most transit tunnel projects, significant portions of the alignment are constructed adjacent to or beneath buildings. The LPA passes beneath homes and schools in these neighborhoods because the curve radius required for subway tunnels is much wider than that required at a typical surface street intersection. The current alignment minimizes tunneling under buildings to the east and west of both the Century City Stations. The station position on Constellation Boulevard requires the tunnel alignment to be under the south portion of Beverly Hills High School Building B in order to reach the station location. There is no reasonable tunnel alignment that does not pass under homes or structures within the Beverly Hills High School campus.

631-3

The geotechnical studies conducted during preparation of the Final EIS/EIR concluded that tunneling can be safely carried out beneath the Beverly Hills High School campus and the West Beverly Hills, Century City, and Westwood neighborhoods. The use of state-of-the-art pressurized closed-face TBMs for soft-ground tunneling has greatly improved the control of ground movements such that tunneling can be done with minimal surface settlements. The presence of the tunnels will neither affect the risk to buildings above them during an earthquake nor change the severity of shaking. Finally, tunnels can be constructed and operated safely in gassy grounds and oil wells do not pose an unmitigatable risk to tunneling.

The additional detailed geotechnical studies also assessed soil conditions and determine the potential for noise or vibration impacts on the surface along the refined alignments. These studies concluded that the predicted vibration and noise levels are within the FTA requirements and operation of the subway is not anticipated to have adverse impacts with the implementation of mitigation, including areas where the tunnels pass beneath homes and schools. During construction, low levels of noise and vibration may be experienced for a day or two as each of the two TBMs pass under a given location. In addition, as the tunnels are driven, construction trains bring supplies to and from the tunnel heading. However, these underground construction noises will also be controlled to be within Metro criteria.

The Westside Subway Extension will not reduce the availability of BHHS for use as an emergency shelter or impact the operations of its use as an emergency shelter. Furthermore, tunneling would not prevent future development of the BHHS campus. The vertical alignment of the tunnel would be 55 to 70 feet below the ground surface (to the top of the tunnel), which would allow for construction of an underground structure over the tunnel at a later date.

These geotechnical studies also determined that the Century City Santa Monica Station would cross the West Beverly Hills Lineament, a northern extension of the active Newport-Inglewood Fault, which poses a significant safety risk to passengers at this station location. No evidence of faulting was found at the proposed Century City Constellation Station site. Tunnels to the east and west of Century City pass through at least two active faults. However, there are numerous tools, designs, and construction means and methods that have been used elsewhere that can be used to safely tunnel through these fault zones.

In addition, the Century City Constellation Boulevard Station has the best pedestrian environment, can be expected to attract the most transit riders, and is centrally located to help shape the redevelopment of Century City as an important transit-oriented destination on the Westside Subway Extension. Further refinements to the ridership analysis concluded that the Century City Constellation Station would result in 3,350 more boardings

631-3

along new Westside Subway Extension stations than the Century City Santa Monica Station due to proximity to jobs and residences within the critical 600-foot and 1/4-mile walksheds.

Based on all of these factors, the *Century City Station Location Report* concluded by recommending that the Century City Station be located along Constellation Boulevard due to seismic safety concerns at the Santa Monica Boulevard Station and higher ridership projections with Constellation Boulevard Station.

Please refer to Section 8.8.2 and 8.8.3 of the Final EIS/EIR for more detailed responses to concerns related to the Century City Station and alignments and Section 8.8.4 of the Final EIS/EIR for a more detailed response to geotechnical concerns. Refer to Section 7.3 of the Final EIS/EIR and the *Westside Subway Extension Century City Station Location Report* for a comparison of the two Century City Station locations. The results of further geotechnical investigations in the Century City vicinity can be found in the *Westside Subway Extension Century City Area Fault Investigation Report* and the *Westside Subway Extension Century City Area Tunneling Safety Report*. The results of further ridership studies can be found in the *Westside Subway Extension Technical Report Summarizing the Results of the Forecasted Alternatives* and the *Westside Subway Extension Century City TOD and Walk Access Study*. All reports are available on the Metro Westside Subway Extension Project website: www.metro.net/projects/westside/westside-reports.

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Councilmember, Fifth District

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October 18, 2010

Mr. David Mieger, Project Director
Countywide Planning & Development
Metro
1 Gateway Plaza, 99-22-5
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Mieger:

598-1

I am writing in strong support of Alternative #2, but first I want to begin by congratulating you, Jody Feerst Litvak and the rest of the project team of the Westside Subway Extension for your hard work and perseverance as you have reached this critical milestone for this project. The construction and completion of the Westside Subway Extension is the most critically needed major transportation project for the Westside of Los Angeles and for our entire region. As you have illustrated in the draft document the study area suffers from substantial traffic congestion and already we have the highest transit ridership numbers along this corridor in the entire country. I believe that the subway extended along this corridor will offer a substantially faster and more efficient transit option that will entice substantial numbers of current private automobile commuters to choose heavy rail instead. This project will increase new subway ridership and will contribute to significant reductions in service street and freeway traffic congestion on the Westside.

It is true that because of politics and transportation policies of the past, Los Angeles County has been substantially behind most other major American population centers in building a light and heavy rail transit system. We now have that opportunity and the extension of the subway will result in a heavy and light rail capacity system that will reach the most critical population centers beyond the downtown area. As the document shows, approximately 300,000 people travel into the Westside every day from throughout the region. In my district, this includes the major employment centers of Westwood and Century City. Many commuters also travel to neighboring Beverly Hills and Santa Monica. I believe that many of my constituents who live within my district will utilize the Westside subway extension to travel to downtown and other destinations.

Proudly serving the communities of Bel Air, Beverly Crest, Beverlywood, California Country Club, Carthay Circle, Century City, Cheviot Hills, Comstock Hills, Encino, Fairfax, Hollywood, Malibu, Melrose, Oak Forest Canyon, Palms, Pico-Robertson, Rossmore, Sherman Oaks, Sherman Village, Studio City, Tract 7260, Valley Village, West of Westwood, Westside Village, Westwood, Westwood Gardens, Westwood South of Santa Monica.

598-1

Your support for the Westside Subway Extension, specifically Alternative 2 (Westwood/VA Hospital Extension), has been noted. On October 28, 2010, the Metro Board of Directors identified Alternative 2 as the Locally Preferred Alternative. Only Alternatives 1 and 2 are affordable within the adopted Long Range Transportation Plan, and between them, Alternative 2 provides significantly higher ridership and better cost effectiveness. Additionally, Alternative 2 serves the VA Hospital and other communities west of the I-405 more effectively.

Please refer to Sections 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5 of the Final EIS/EIR for an overview of the development of alternatives and the LPA selection process.

Mr. David Mieger, Metro
October 18, 2010
Page 2

598-2 | As noted, I am advocating for Alternative #2, a 9 mile extension of the existing Metro Purple Line subway from its current terminus at the Wilshire/Western Station to a Westwood/VA station. This alternative will bring the subway to the major employment centers of Century City and Westwood along with serving the eastern edge of my district including the heavily trafficked Miracle Mile and Fairfax areas. Servicing these areas is a win for our entire region. I support Alternative 2 over Alternative 1 because of the great benefits of the easier bus connections along with kiss and ride / passenger drop-off options for those commuting to and from points west of the 405 freeway as opposed to the more congested Westwood area.

In a perfect world, my real preference would be to support Alternative 5, provided that there was real funding options available to support identified need for more convenient service extended for more communities and greater numbers of commuters. The connection to the Hollywood/Highland station would make a faster and more convenient option for commuters to and from the San Fernando Valley and points beyond to Westwood, Century City and other points from West Hollywood and points west. This would also offer more options for those who reside in communities near the Beverly Center, the City of West Hollywood and other neighborhoods in close proximity. Of course, with Alternative 5 this system could also reach as far as the large employment center in Santa Monica, and that would be beneficial to our entire region.

Since current revenue sources have not been identified for Alternative 5, I am pleased to support Alternative 2. The passage nearly two years ago of Measure R has at least put us in the position at this time to move ahead with building the first critical pieces to serve our region. It will be up to elected leaders such as myself to begin to find future potential revenue sources to build into Alternative 2. Meanwhile, I will strongly support the 30/10 plan as a means to build Alternative 5 much faster than the current projections.

598-3 | I commend the Metro staff for the early efforts to address community concerns regarding tunneling under residential communities. My expectation of Metro is that upon the opening of operation no noise or vibration will be experienced by the residents of Westwood and other communities that lie over the tunneling between the Century City and the Westwood stations. As preliminary engineering of the tunneling progresses it is my expectation that Metro will become increasingly proactive in reaching out to all residential property owners that lie near or directly above the tunnel routes. Residents must be fully informed of impacts or lack thereof during and after construction of the project.

I understand and support the staff recommendation to proceed at this time with two options for the Century City and Westwood stations, along with the tunneling route between the two destinations. My priority is to make sure that each of these communities is served by the Westside Subway Extension; clearly that is accomplished with the current recommendation.

598-2

Your support for Alternative 2 has been noted. Please see response above to comment number 598-1.

Your support for Alternative 5 has also been noted. The Draft EIS/EIR demonstrated a significant market for a subway serving Santa Monica and West Hollywood. However, there is not sufficient Measure R or other funding available to construct a Santa Monica or West Hollywood subway at this time. The Santa Monica and West Hollywood corridors are included in the Strategic Element of the 2009 Long Range Transportation Plan. Further study could occur should funding be identified and secured in the future. If the LPA is approved for implementation by the Metro Board, the LPA will also be designed so as not to preclude future westward extension of the subway.

598-3

Your comment regarding noise and vibration during operation has been noted.

Subway tunnels are typically at least 50 to 70 feet below the surface to the track depth. As a result, noise and vibration are not typically noticeable at the surface. In the Beverly Hills, Century City, and Westwood areas, the proposed subway tunnels would generally be deeper than this in the areas where it would pass beneath homes and schools. For example, at Beverly Hills High School, the track depth would be 75-80 feet below the first floor of the school buildings. In Westwood, the track depth is more than 100 feet deep in most places. Since the first segment of the subway opened in 1993, Metro has received no complaints about noise or vibration due to subway operations.

Additional detailed geotechnical studies were conducted during the Final EIS/EIR phase to assess soil conditions and determine the potential for noise or vibration impacts on the surface along the refined alignments. This included measurements at the Beverly Hills High School site and in its buildings, as well as in the residential area between the Century City and Westwood/UCLA Stations.

These studies concluded that the predicted vibration and noise levels are within the FTA requirements, and tunnel operation is not anticipated to have adverse impacts with the implementation of mitigation. Noise from operation of the LPA from such sources as station ventilation system fans, emergency ventilation fans, traction power substations, and emergency generators will be designed to meet the noise-level limits specified in Metro Rail Design Criteria and will not result in any noise impacts. There are no vibration-sensitive receivers along the LPA that are predicted to exceed the FTA ground-borne vibration criteria.

Three locations along the LPA were identified where exceedance of the FTA ground-borne noise criteria will occur due to train operations along tangent track or through crossovers, if mitigation measures are not implemented. These locations are the Wilshire Ebell Theatre, an apartment building on Wilshire Boulevard at Orange Drive, and the Saban Theatre. To

598-3

mitigate the potential for ground-borne noise impacts at these three locations, the following mitigation measures will be implemented:

- VIB-1—High compliance direct-fixation resilient rail fasteners will be incorporated into the design of the trackwork at the Wilshire Ebell Theatre and the Saban Theatre, which will reduce ground-borne noise by 5 to 7 dBA.
- VIB-2—A low impact crossover such as a moveable point frog or a spring-loaded frog will be used in the design of Wilshire/La Brea No. 10 double crossover for the apartments, which will reduce ground-borne noise by 5 to 6 dBA.

With these mitigation measures, there are no vibration-sensitive receivers that are predicted to exceed the FTA ground-borne vibration criteria during operation. Mitigation measure VIB-2 was added subsequent to the Draft EIS/EIR due to the additional studies conducted during preparation of this Final EIS/EIR.

Should future underground construction be considered that would place a school building foundation closer to the tunnel, mitigation measures could be implemented to reduce ground-borne noise and vibration impacts. To mitigate such noise impacts, a high-compliance direct-fixation resilient rail fastener can be incorporated into the track work.

Results of these additional noise and vibration analyses and mitigation measures can be found in Section 4.6 of this Final EIS/EIR and the *Westside Subway Extension Noise and Vibration Study*. All reports are available on the Metro Westside Subway Extension Project website: www.metro.net/projects/westside/westside-reports.

With respect to reaching out to those above the subway tunneling, Metro will continue their active public involvement throughout the duration of the project, and Metro will work with the property owners above subway tunneling to secure subsurface easements. Please refer to Chapter 8 of the Final EIS/EIR for a description of all outreach activities conducted during the planning of the Westside Subway Extension, including during the preparation of the Final EIS/EIR.

Mr. David Mieger, Metro
October 18, 2010
Page 3

598-4 | In recent weeks I have been hearing from leaders of the Century City business community and from some neighboring residential communities within my district about the preference for the Century City Constellation Station. I recognize that there are a number of potential benefits, most importantly that since the station is more central within the Century City business district, the potential ridership numbers are significantly higher. If this station option is pursued, the concerns of our neighbors in Beverly Hills regarding the tunneling under or near residential properties and Beverly Hills High School will need to be addressed.

I look forward to the opportunity to offer further comment in the future. Please continue to stay in close contact with me and with my staff as your efforts proceed. We wish you well as you continue in the process of making this critical project for our region a reality.

Sincerely,



PAUL KORETZ

598-4

Your comment regarding the location of the Century City Station and associated alignments has been noted. On October 28, 2010, the Metro Board of Directors identified Alternative 2 (Westwood/VA Hospital Extension) as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). As part of the LPA selection, the Metro Board of Directors decided to continue to study both station location options in Century City (Santa Monica Boulevard and Constellation Boulevard) to address concerns raised by the community regarding locating a station directly on a seismic fault and the safety of tunneling under homes and schools. The Metro Board of Directors also decided to not include the Constellation South alignment between the Wilshire/Rodeo and Century City Stations as part of the LPA, but to continue to study the Constellation North and the Santa Monica Boulevard alignments. The Constellation South alignment passed beneath more residential properties than the Constellation North or Santa Monica Boulevard alignments. In addition, the Metro Board of Directors decided to not include the West or Central alignments between Century City and Westwood/UCLA as part of the LPA, but to continue to study the East alignment because the East alignment is the most direct and least expensive route between the two stations.

Safety, both during construction and eventual operations, is one of Metro's highest priorities and is one of the key evaluation criteria in selection of the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). In response to the Metro Board of Director's request for more information, further analysis was undertaken to focus on the engineering and environmental aspects of the two options during the preparation of the Final EIS/EIR to expand on the studies conducted in preparation of the Draft EIS/EIR. It should be noted that prior to conducting the comparative study, the Santa Monica Boulevard Station location was shifted slightly to the east from the location in the Draft EIS/EIR to avoid the Santa Monica Fault zone.

On most transit tunnel projects, significant portions of the alignment are constructed adjacent to or beneath buildings. The LPA passes beneath homes and schools in these neighborhoods because the curve radius required for subway tunnels is much wider than that required at a typical surface street intersection. The current alignment minimizes tunneling under buildings to the east and west of both the Century City Stations. The station position on Constellation Boulevard requires the tunnel alignment to be under the south portion of Beverly Hills High School Building B in order to reach the station location. There is no reasonable tunnel alignment that does not pass under homes or structures within the Beverly Hills High School campus.

The geotechnical studies conducted during preparation of the Final EIS/EIR concluded that tunneling can be safely carried out beneath the Beverly Hills High School campus and the West Beverly Hills, Century City, and Westwood neighborhoods. The use of state-of-the-art pressurized closed-face TBMs for soft-ground tunneling has greatly improved the control of ground movements such that tunneling can be done with minimal surface settlements. The presence of the tunnels will neither affect the risk to buildings above them during an earthquake nor change the severity of shaking. Finally, tunnels can be constructed and

598-4

operated safely in gassy grounds and oil wells do not pose an unmitigatable risk to tunneling.

The additional detailed geotechnical studies also assessed soil conditions and determine the potential for noise or vibration impacts on the surface along the refined alignments. These studies concluded that the predicted vibration and noise levels are within the FTA requirements and operation of the subway is not anticipated to have adverse impacts with the implementation of mitigation, including areas where the tunnels pass beneath homes and schools. During construction, low levels of noise and vibration may be experienced for a day or two as each of the two TBMs pass under a given location. In addition, as the tunnels are driven, construction trains bring supplies to and from the tunnel heading. However, these underground construction noises will also be controlled to be within Metro criteria.

The Westside Subway Extension will not reduce the availability of BHHS for use as an emergency shelter or impact the operations of its use as an emergency shelter. Furthermore, tunneling would not prevent future development of the BHHS campus. The vertical alignment of the tunnel would be 55 to 70 feet below the ground surface (to the top of the tunnel), which would allow for construction of an underground structure over the tunnel at a later date.

These geotechnical studies also determined that the Century City Santa Monica Station would cross the West Beverly Hills Lineament, a northern extension of the active Newport-Inglewood Fault, which poses a significant safety risk to passengers at this station location. No evidence of faulting was found at the proposed Century City Constellation Station site. Tunnels to the east and west of Century City pass through at least two active faults. However, there are numerous tools, designs, and construction means and methods that have been used elsewhere that can be used to safely tunnel through these fault zones.

In addition, the Century City Constellation Boulevard Station has the best pedestrian environment, can be expected to attract the most transit riders, and is centrally located to help shape the redevelopment of Century City as an important transit-oriented destination on the Westside Subway Extension. Further refinements to the ridership analysis concluded that the Century City Constellation Station would result in 3,350 more boardings along new Westside Subway Extension stations than the Century City Santa Monica Station due to proximity to jobs and residences within the critical 600-foot and 1/4-mile walksheds.

Based on all of these factors, the *Century City Station Location Report* concluded by recommending that the Century City Station be located along Constellation Boulevard due to seismic safety concerns at the Santa Monica Boulevard Station and higher ridership projections with Constellation Boulevard Station.

598-4

Please refer to Section 8.8.2 and 8.8.3 of the Final EIS/EIR for more detailed responses to concerns related to the Century City Station and alignments and Section 8.8.4 of the Final EIS/EIR for a more detailed response to geotechnical concerns. Refer to Section 7.3 of the Final EIS/EIR and the *Westside Subway Extension Century City Station Location Report* for a comparison of the two Century City Station locations. The results of further geotechnical investigations in the Century City vicinity can be found in the *Westside Subway Extension Century City Area Fault Investigation Report* and the *Westside Subway Extension Century City Area Tunneling Safety Report*. The results of further ridership studies can be found in the *Westside Subway Extension Technical Report Summarizing the Results of the Forecasted Alternatives* and the *Westside Subway Extension Century City TOD and Walk Access Study*. All reports are available on the Metro Westside Subway Extension Project website: www.metro.net/projects/westside/westside-reports.



CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES

TOM LABONGE
COUNCILMEMBER, 4TH DISTRICT

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September 20, 2010

David Mieger, Project Director
DEO, Countywide Planning & Development
Metro
1 Gateway Plaza, 99-22-5
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Mieger,

As a former Metro Board Member and the one who led the discussion about lifting the Congressional ban that allowed the Westside Extension plans to proceed, I am glad that we're at this point in the process.

278-1 | After studying the different proposed routes, I want to make a few suggestions. We should absolutely go west under Wilshire Blvd. to San Vicente Blvd. Have you considered going north on San Vicente Blvd. to connect to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center? Have you thought about continuing west on Burton Way through Beverly Hills to Santa Monica Blvd.? This would put you in line to reach Century City, where you could install long portals with people-movers like they do in many European subway systems.

278-2 | I encourage Metro to consider using the existing right-of-ways under streets - especially wide streets like San Vicente Blvd., Burton Way and Santa Monica Blvd. - and avoid working under residential streets and Beverly Hills High School.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

TOM LABONGE
Councilmember, 4th District

278-1

Your comment regarding the alignment of the Westside Subway Extension has been noted. Metro completed an Alternatives Analysis Study (AA Study) for the Westside Subway Extension Project in January 2009. The AA Study considered whether improvements were needed to the transit system in the area and evaluated various alignments. These alignments as well as alternative modes are illustrated in Section 2.3 of this Final EIS/EIR. The alignments were developed with the goal of linking major activity centers within the Study Area as illustrated in Section 1.3.2 in this Final EIS/EIR. The public comments that were submitted during the Early Scoping Period were considered in the further development of these and other alignments, including connections to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center extending into West Hollywood. Extending the alignment on Wilshire Boulevard further north and then heading to Century City via Burton Way would add additional costs due to additional length and not provide for the most direct connections at the Wilshire/Rodeo and Century City Stations. A people mover, depending on the distance, could increase project costs and long-term maintenance. These alignments were evaluated based on various engineering, environmental, financial, and ridership criteria and the recommended alignment - Wilshire Boulevard with options in Century City was moved forward for further evaluation in the Draft EIS/EIR phase. Please refer to the *Westside Extension Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis Study* for more details. This report is available on the Metro Westside Subway Extension Project website: www.metro.net/projects/westside/westside-reports.

278-2

Your comment regarding tunneling beneath existing right-of-way to avoid residential streets and Beverly Hills High School has been noted. On October 28, 2010, the Metro Board of Directors identified Alternative 2 (Westwood/VA Hospital Extension) as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). As part of the LPA selection, the Metro Board of Directors decided to continue to study both station location options in Century City (Santa Monica Boulevard and Constellation Boulevard) to address concerns raised by the community regarding locating a station directly on a seismic fault and the safety of tunneling under homes and schools. The Metro Board of Directors also decided to not include the Constellation South alignment between the Wilshire/Rodeo and Century City Stations as part of the LPA, but to continue to study the Constellation North and the Santa Monica Boulevard alignments. The Constellation South alignment passed beneath more residential properties than the Constellation North or Santa Monica Boulevard alignments. In addition, the Metro Board of Directors decided to not include the West or Central alignments between Century City and Westwood/UCLA as part of the LPA, but to continue to study the East alignment because the East alignment is the most direct and least expensive route between the two stations.

Safety, both during construction and eventual operations, is one of Metro's highest priorities and is one of the key evaluation criteria in selection of the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). In response to the Metro Board of Director's request for more information, further

278-2

analysis was undertaken to focus on the engineering and environmental aspects of the two options during the preparation of the Final EIS/EIR to expand on the studies conducted in preparation of the Draft EIS/EIR. It should be noted that prior to conducting the comparative study, the Santa Monica Boulevard Station location was shifted slightly to the east from the location in the Draft EIS/EIR to avoid the Santa Monica Fault zone.

On most transit tunnel projects, significant portions of the alignment are constructed adjacent to or beneath buildings. The LPA passes beneath homes and schools in these neighborhoods because the curve radius required for subway tunnels is much wider than that required at a typical surface street intersection. The current alignment minimizes tunneling under buildings to the east and west of both the Century City Stations. The station position on Constellation Boulevard requires the tunnel alignment to be under the south portion of Beverly Hills High School Building B in order to reach the station location. There is no reasonable tunnel alignment that does not pass under homes or structures within the Beverly Hills High School campus.

The geotechnical studies conducted during preparation of the Final EIS/EIR concluded that tunneling can be safely carried out beneath the Beverly Hills High School campus and the West Beverly Hills, Century City, and Westwood neighborhoods. The use of state-of-the-art pressurized closed-face TBMs for soft-ground tunneling has greatly improved the control of ground movements such that tunneling can be done with minimal surface settlements. The presence of the tunnels will neither affect the risk to buildings above them during an earthquake nor change the severity of shaking. Finally, tunnels can be constructed and operated safely in gassy grounds and oil wells do not pose an unmitigatable risk to tunneling.

The additional detailed geotechnical studies also assessed soil conditions and determine the potential for noise or vibration impacts on the surface along the refined alignments. These studies concluded that the predicted vibration and noise levels are within the FTA requirements and operation of the subway is not anticipated to have adverse impacts with the implementation of mitigation, including areas where the tunnels pass beneath homes and schools. During construction, low levels of noise and vibration may be experienced for a day or two as each of the two TBMs pass under a given location. In addition, as the tunnels are driven, construction trains bring supplies to and from the tunnel heading. However, these underground construction noises will also be controlled to be within Metro criteria.

The Westside Subway Extension will not reduce the availability of BHHS for use as an emergency shelter or impact the operations of its use as an emergency shelter. Furthermore, tunneling would not prevent future development of the BHHS campus. The vertical alignment of the tunnel would be 55 to 70 feet below the ground surface (to the top of the tunnel), which would allow for construction of an underground structure over the

278-2

tunnel at a later date.

These geotechnical studies also determined that the Century City Santa Monica Station would cross the West Beverly Hills Lineament, a northern extension of the active Newport-Inglewood Fault, which poses a significant safety risk to passengers at this station location. No evidence of faulting was found at the proposed Century City Constellation Station site. Tunnels to the east and west of Century City pass through at least two active faults. However, there are numerous tools, designs, and construction means and methods that have been used elsewhere that can be used to safely tunnel through these fault zones.

In addition, the Century City Constellation Boulevard Station has the best pedestrian environment, can be expected to attract the most transit riders, and is centrally located to help shape the redevelopment of Century City as an important transit-oriented destination on the Westside Subway Extension. Further refinements to the ridership analysis concluded that the Century City Constellation Station would result in 3,350 more boardings along new Westside Subway Extension stations than the Century City Santa Monica Station due to proximity to jobs and residences within the critical 600-foot and 1/4-mile walksheds.

Based on all of these factors, the *Century City Station Location Report* concluded by recommending that the Century City Station be located along Constellation Boulevard due to seismic safety concerns at the Santa Monica Boulevard Station and higher ridership projections with Constellation Boulevard Station.

Please refer to Section 8.8.2 and 8.8.3 of the Final EIS/EIR for more detailed responses to concerns related to the Century City Station and alignments and Section 8.8.4 of the Final EIS/EIR for a more detailed response to geotechnical concerns. Refer to Section 7.3 of the Final EIS/EIR and the *Westside Subway Extension Century City Station Location Report* for a comparison of the two Century City Station locations. The results of further geotechnical investigations in the Century City vicinity can be found in the *Westside Subway Extension Century City Area Fault Investigation Report* and the *Westside Subway Extension Century City Area Tunneling Safety Report*. *The results of further ridership studies can be found in the Westside Subway Extension Technical Report Summarizing the Results of the Forecasted Alternatives and the Westside Subway Extension Century City TOD and Walk Access Study. All reports are available on the Metro Westside Subway Extension Project website: www.metro.net/projects/westside/westside-reports.*



BILL ROSENDAHL
City of Los Angeles
Councilmember, Eleventh District

Committees
Chair, Transportation
Vice Chair, Trade, Commerce & Tourism
Member, Budget & Finance
Member, Ad Hoc on Economic Recovery & Reinvestment
Member, Board of Referred Powers

October 18, 2010

David Mieger
Project Director
Metro
One Gateway Plaza, MS 99-22-5
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Mieger:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIR/EIS) for the Westside Subway Extension.

656-1 | I am pleased that the Westside Subway is moving forward as it will fill a major gap in the rail network by serving as a primary connector between residential communities and job centers on the westside. Since the opening of the Blue Line in 1990, Metro has overseen the construction of nearly 80 miles of light and heavy rail. Each subsequent rail project has brought ridership increases across the entire network by providing people with a new means of accessing the City. In the interest of maximizing accessibility, it would be my strong preference to see a fully built out Westside Subway that included both the Santa Monica and West Hollywood Extensions. Nevertheless, given the existing funding constraints, I am supportive of Alternative 2 which extends the project to the VA.

I appreciate Metro taking into consideration the following comments and concerns.

656-2 | VA Station Option #6

I am pleased that both options for a north and south VA station are moving forward for further study. With closer proximity to the medical center, the south VA station appears to be the preferable option. Providing direct access to the medical center would be an enormous benefit for the transit dependent who rely on the vital services the medical center provides.

However, I do understand that the VA has expressed concern that an influx of transit riders at a southern station may prove disruptive to their day-to-day operations. Metro's ongoing sensitivity to the concerns of the VA as both stations move forward for further study is greatly appreciated.

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656-1

Your support for the Westside Subway Extension, specifically Alternative 2 (Westwood/VA Hospital Extension), has been noted. On October 28, 2010, the Metro Board of Directors identified Alternative 2 as the Locally Preferred Alternative. Only Alternatives 1 and 2 are affordable within the adopted Long Range Transportation Plan, and between them, Alternative 2 provides significantly higher ridership and better cost effectiveness. Additionally, Alternative 2 serves the VA Hospital and other communities west of the I-405 more effectively.

The Draft EIS/EIR demonstrated a significant market for a subway serving Santa Monica and West Hollywood. However, there is not sufficient Measure R or other funding available to construct a Santa Monica or West Hollywood subway at this time. The Santa Monica and West Hollywood corridors are included in the Strategic Element of the 2009 Long Range Transportation Plan. Further study could occur should funding be identified and secured in the future. If the LPA is approved for implementation by the Metro Board, the LPA will also be designed so as not to preclude future westward extension of the subway.

Please refer to Sections 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5 of the Final EIS/EIR for an overview of the development of alternatives and the LPA selection process.

656-2

Your preference for the South location of the Westwood/ VA Hospital Station has been noted. On October 28, 2010, the Metro Board of Directors identified Alternative 2 (Westwood/VA Hospital Extension) as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). As part of the LPA selection, the Metro Board decided to continue to study both Westwood/VA Hospital station location options (South and North).

A comparative study of the two proposed Westwood/VA Hospital station locations, including engineering, costs, urban design, and environmental impact considerations, was conducted during the Final EIS/EIR to expand on the studies conducted in preparation of the Draft EIS/EIR.

While both options are within one-quarter mile of the VA Hospital, the Westwood/VA Hospital South Station site is 500 feet from the hospital and on the same side of Wilshire Boulevard, while the Westwood/VA Hospital North Station site is 1,200 feet away on the other side of Wilshire Boulevard. Additionally, the North Option could be problematic in the event of a future extension to Santa Monica due to the tight radius curve that would be required to extend west beneath residential properties. However, the construction of the South Option would result in more impacts to traffic circulation during construction, including temporary ramp closures at the I-405 interchange.

Based on these factors, the recommendation is to locate the Westwood/VA Hospital Station on the south side of Wilshire Boulevard as this location would provide better pedestrian

656-2

access to the VA Medical Center and would more easily accommodate a future westward extension of the subway.

Metro has and will continue to coordinate with the Veterans Administration regarding the location of the Westwood/VA Hospital Station.

Please refer to Section 8.8.5 of the Final EIS/EIR for more detailed responses to concerns related to the Westwood/VA Hospital Station and to Sections 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5 of the Final EIS/EIR for an overview of the development of alternatives, including station locations, and the LPA selection process. The *Westside Subway Extension Alternatives Screening and Refinement Following Scoping Report* provides a more detailed description of the refinements to the Westwood/VA Hospital Station following Draft EIS/EIR scoping in response to community comments and engineering requirements. Refer to Section 7.3 of the Final EIS/EIR and the *Westside Subway Extension Westwood/UCLA Station and the Westwood/VA Hospital Station Locations Report* for a comparison of the two Westwood/UCLA locations. All reports are available on the Metro Westside Subway Extension Project website: www.metro.net/projects/westside/westside-reports.

656-3

Parking at Stations

Metro's decision to not include automobile parking at any of the proposed stations has been of concern to many of my constituents. I do note that Metro currently has parking facilities available at the both terminus of the Blue Line in Long Beach, both terminuses of the Red Line, Green Line and Gold Line and has plans for parking facilities along the Exposition Lines. Moreover, the utilization rates of many of these parking facilities are quite high.

In reviewing the EIS/EIR it is also clear that Metro believes there is adequate off-street parking already existing near the stations to meet the demand. However, management of parking cannot be left to chance. Metro should facilitate shared parking use agreements with private operators near stations to ensure that parking spillover doesn't have a negative impact on residents and local businesses.

If however, the policy goal of Metro is to reduce automobile dependency by not supplying or facilitating parking arrangements then an equivalent effort should be made to facilitate non-motorized modes of transit. I encourage Metro to show leadership in ensuring that pedestrian and bicycling amenities are provided beyond current Metro standards not just at stations but also surrounding the stations. Providing ample bicycle facilities including lockers, U-racks and Mobility Hubs must be incorporated into the design of the existing project in a way that is tailored for each station, not as a standard to be implemented as an after thought. Moreover, Metro must ensure that adequate pedestrian amenities are provided not only at the station but also along the corridors that lead the nearby transit connections including adequate lighting, ample sidewalk widths, streetscape improvements and wayfinding where appropriate. Creating a safe, seamless and pleasant pathway from one transit connection to the next is the only way people will choose to leave their automobiles at home.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide these comments. I look forward to receiving Metro's response to these comments as we move towards the public hearing process.

Regards,



BILL ROSENDAHL
Councilmember, 11th District

656-3

Your comments about parking have been noted. Park-and-ride can be an important mode of access to transit. However, these facilities are usually located in low-density areas that lack local bus service feeding the stations. That is not the case with this Project. Therefore, none of the stations proposed as part of the Project will provide parking.

The provision of park-and-ride facilities would be inconsistent with the purpose and need of the Project. The Project Study Area is already very congested and Metro seeks to discourage people from driving to access the subway. Park-and-ride facilities also could lead to increased auto use and potentially result in traffic impacts at intersections.

The provision of park-and-ride facilities also would be inconsistent with both the existing built environment surrounding stations and efforts to encourage transit-oriented development. The Project corridor is very dense due to medium and high density commercial and residential development. The construction of park-and-ride facilities would consume space that could be put to more productive residential and commercial uses.

Any added park-and-ride facilities would have major implications on Project costs. The study area also has very high land costs and there is lack of available parcels for park-and-ride development. Due to land costs and scarcity, any parking would need to be in multi-story garages, resulting in substantially higher capital costs than current estimates.

Section 3.6 of this Final EIS/EIR estimates the demand for parking at the stations and determines whether surrounding neighborhoods would experience any spillover parking impacts due to subway riders looking for free, unrestricted parking. This analysis concluded that all stations, with the exception of the Wilshire/Rodeo and Century City (both Constellation and Santa Monica) Stations, are anticipated to result in some parking spillover impacts within one-half mile of the stations without mitigation in place. To reduce these spillover parking impacts, the following mitigation measures will be implemented at all stations where an impact was identified:

- T-2-Parking Monitoring and Community Outreach
- T-3-Residential Permit Parking Districts
- T-4-Consideration of Shared Parking Program

As a means of potentially using off-street parking in the vicinity of stations, Metro will consider developing a shared parking program with operators of off-street parking facilities to accommodate the Project's parking demand, thereby allowing subway riders to use excess capacity in these facilities. The revised off-street parking analysis conducted for this Final EIS/EIR determined that more than 100,000 off-street parking spaces serve commercial land uses within a one-half mile walking distance of the seven LPA station locations. As part of the analysis, a sampling of parking facility operators for each station location was contacted to determine availability of public parking in their facility on weekdays and weekends, daily parking rate, facility occupancy, and interest in partnering

656-3

with Metro to make parking available to riders of the Westside Subway Extension. Based on a sample of operators at each station area, some shared parking potential for subway riders exists. However, this potential may be limited at individual facilities because many are near their capacity during weekdays.

For six months following the opening of service, Metro will monitor off-street parking activity in station areas through communication with parking operators to qualitatively gauge the effects on parking demand as a result of the Project and revisit their interest in participating in a shared parking program. It is anticipated that the Project will reduce parking demand in station areas, as some employees will use the subway to commute to work rather than driving. Because the development of a shared parking program will be contingent on the willingness of parking facility operators to participate, as well as the availability of parking supply at their facilities, it may be infeasible to implement this measure at some or all station areas where spillover parking impacts have been identified.

With implementation of the mitigation measures, spillover parking is not anticipated to be an adverse effect to neighborhoods surrounding the stations.

Convenient and safe access by pedestrians and bicyclists will be an important element of the Westside Subway Extension Project. Sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and other facilities along the Project corridor support non-motorized access. To assess potential future access improvements to subway stations, Project design efforts included a study of circulation needs in each station area. The results of this study are available in the *Westside Subway Extension Station Circulation Report* and Section 3.7 of this Final EIS/EIR. This study provided important guidance on potential station features, including those specifically relating to pedestrian and bicycle access. Areas explored by the study included the following:

- Provision of bicycle facilities at stations
- Enhanced bus shelters and lighting
- Making crosswalks more visible with crosswalk treatments and advance stop bars, increasing safety for pedestrians transferring from buses or traveling to other destinations on foot
- Improving the transit and pedestrian environment with the addition of sidewalk treatments

Results of the station circulation study helped direct further design of subway stations and supported station area planning for the Project. The station area planning examined access opportunities and potential improvements in the neighborhoods surrounding subway stations.

Section 3.7 of this Final EIS/EIR summarizes the findings of the *Station Circulation Report* and lists specific measures to be implemented at stations to improve pedestrian and bicycle access. These measures include the following:

656-3

- T-5 through T-8-Install Crossing Deterrents/Crossing Deterrents
- T-9-Provide consistency with General Plan Designation Sidewalk Width Adjacent to Metro-Controlled Parcels
- T-10-Provide consistency with General Plan Designation Sidewalk Width Coordination with Jurisdictions
- T-11-Provide High Visibility Crosswalk Treatments
- T-12-Meet Federal, State, and Local Standards for Crossing
- T-13-Meet Metro Rail Design Criteria Minimums for Bicycle Parking
- T-14-Study Bicycle Parking Demand and Footprint Configuration
- T-15-Determine Alternative Sites for Bicycle Parking

Metro is committed to working with local jurisdictions to improve the environment for pedestrians and bicyclists at all Project stations and will continue to assess and refine the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists as the Project progresses into Final Design.

Please refer to Section 8.8.8 of the Final EIS/EIR for more detailed responses to concerns related to station connectivity, including parking. In addition, the *Westside Subway Extension Station Circulation Report* provides a comprehensive station access circulation study of Project stations and Section 3.7 provides an analysis of potential impacts to pedestrian and bicycle networks. Section 3.6 of the Final EIS/EIR estimates the demand for parking at the stations and provides an analysis of potential spillover parking impacts to surrounding communities. All reports are available on the Metro Westside Subway Extension Project website: www.metro.net/projects/westside/westside-reports.