



## Brighton to Roxford Double Track Project

Frequently Asked Questions

January 2017

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

#### What is the Brighton to Roxford Double Track Project?

The Brighton to Roxford Double Track Project (Project), proposed by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), adds a second main line track to an 11-mile single track transportation corridor in east San Fernando Valley. The corridor runs between Hollywood Way in the City of Burbank and through the cities of Los Angeles and San Fernando, to Roxford Street in Sylmar. This creates over 25 miles of continuous double track rail in the San Fernando Valley.

The goal of the Project is to improve regional rail and mobility service while enhancing safety for the corridor communities and commuters on the Metrolink Antelope Valley Line (AVL). The proposed project will be implemented within an active rail corridor within existing rail, public, and station right-of-ways. The Project will lay the ground work necessary for cities to secure Quiet Zones and includes safety improvements at rail crossings that benefit pedestrians, local traffic, communities and Metrolink riders. Roadways and sidewalks will be improved, new and upgraded traffic and pedestrian crossing equipment will be installed, including a new pedestrian-only underpass crossing at the future North Burbank Airport Metrolink Station, and drainage and landscaping will be enhanced. The community, commuters, and other stakeholders will be kept involved as the project advances through the various development phases.

#### Why build the Brighton to Roxford Double Track Project?

The existing single main line track corridor is used by both Metrolink commuter rail service as well as Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) freight service and accommodates approximately 35 trains per day (combined operations). This results in a significant bottleneck for rail transportation and reduces the on-time performance of Metrolink trains. Currently, trains must frequently wait at sidings, leading to longer commutes, unpredictable arrivals and departures, and undue noise in surrounding communities.

The addition of a second main line track will allow for opposing traffic to run on separate tracks, improving the overall flow of trains, effectively creating a “two-way street” for train operations. This will improve regional rail and mobility service while enhancing safety for the corridor communities and commuters on the Metrolink AVL. Additional improvements at rail crossings will enhance traffic and pedestrian safety. As part of this work, Metro will upgrade 16 existing at-grade roadway crossings to become “Quiet Zone Ready” and will add a new pedestrian-only underpass crossing at the future North Burbank Airport Metrolink Station.

#### What is the schedule for this project and when will it be completed?

The flow chart below highlights the major milestones and timeline (subject to change). Currently, the project is in the Environmental Clearance and Preliminary Engineering phase.

ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE *(subject to change):*



## Brighton to Roxford Double Track Project Frequently Asked Questions

Phase 1 – Environmental Clearance and Preliminary Engineering	Spring 2017
Phase 2 – Development of Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E)	Fall 2017
Phase 3 – Project Bids, Contracting, and Award (If funded)	TBD; Dependent on funding
Phase 4 – Construction	TBD; Dependent on funding

### How is this project being funded?

Metro has obtained funding through Measure R, a half-cent sales tax approved by Los Angeles County voters in 2008, for the environmental and preliminary design. Other sources of funding, including state and federal sources, will be sought for right-of-way acquisition and construction, should the project progress to future stages.

### COMMUNITY ISSUES

#### How does double tracking increase safety?

The addition of a second main line track will allow for opposing traffic to run on separate tracks, improving the overall flow of trains, effectively creating a “two-way street” for train operations. As such, a second track improves safety by reducing the likelihood of head-on collisions, similar to driving on a two-lane road instead of a one-lane road. As part of this work, Metro will upgrade 16 existing at-grade roadway crossings to significantly enhance safety for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists using these crossings while also allowing the corridor to become “Quiet Zone Ready.” This is in addition to Metrolink’s investment in Positive Train Control (PTC), a GPS-based safety technology capable of preventing train-to-train collisions, over-speed derailments, and may also bring trains to a safe stop in the event of a natural disaster.

#### Will building the Brighton to Roxford Double Track Project add more trains and increase usage of the corridor?

The addition of a second main line track does not equal a doubling of service. While the double track project will increase the capacity of the corridor, it also enhances service by increasing on-time performance. Currently, the existing Metrolink planning only reflects a small level of increase for the Metrolink AVL in the near future. The purpose of the Project is primarily to make existing service more efficient, increase safety, reduce the burden of idling trains on local residents, and allow for shorter, more reliable service for commuters using the Metrolink AVL. However, as the population of Southern California increases, there is the potential for additional passenger rail service to be added to the Metrolink AVL in order to ease increased traffic congestion on freeways and local streets. With or without the double tracks, it is possible that up to 10 per day trains could be added to the Metrolink AVL in 10 years, depending on ridership and available funding.

#### What is the current and projected use of the corridor by Metrolink?

Currently, the AVL corridor is used by both Metrolink commuter rail service, as well as Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) freight service with approximately 35 trains per day in combined operations. According to Metrolink’s strategic plan, it is possible that up to 10 trains per day could be added in 10 years, depending on ridership and available funding.

#### Will trains be moved closer to homes and businesses?

In areas where the currently single track main line track is expanded to a double track main line, tracks will fill more of the existing right-of-way, and in some cases, may be closer to homes and businesses. Most of the Brighton to Roxford rail right-of-way has sufficient space to keep trains away from existing homes and businesses, however, some portions of the right-of-way in the City of San Fernando will require relocation of the bike path to allow for the added track.

#### At what times of day and night will construction occur?

Construction will be conducted in a manner that minimizes traffic impacts as well as impacts to residents, such as noise and vibration. Daytime construction will be conducted where the activity does not conflict with automobile and railroad traffic and where municipal codes related to construction hours require construction to be during the day. Nighttime construction may occur at certain locations in order to avoid daytime traffic impacts.



## Brighton to Roxford Double Track Project Frequently Asked Questions

### Will noise increase as a result of this project?

A noise study is being conducted as part of this environmental and planning process. The result of that study will be used to highlight any potential impacts and potential solutions for incorporation into the project design.

### Can noise and levels be reduced?

Where necessary, steps can be taken to reduce noise at the source from where it emanates, at the receiver where it is perceived, or along the pathway in between. Metro will work with stakeholders whom may be affected by noise impacts to discuss potential mitigation measures including, sound walls, wheel maintenance, rail grinding, resilient track fasteners, double-paned windows, preparing the corridor for Quiet Zones designation, and more. The project seeks to minimize impacts to the community to the greatest extent possible.

## MOBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

### What benefits will this bring for Metrolink commuters?

This project is designed to improve regional rail and mobility service while enhancing safety for the corridor communities and commuters on the Metrolink AVL. Currently, a Metrolink commuter who rides during the week at peak hours experiences approximately 20 hours of delay annually. Similarly, a Metrolink commuter who rides during the week during non-peak hours experiences approximately 54 hours of delay annually. By improving service, this project may also encourage new ridership on Metrolink.

### What improvements will occur at Metrolink Stations?

Additional platforms are being considered at the Sylmar/San Fernando stations, and a new “North Burbank Airport” Metrolink station is planned to improve access to Burbank Airport. Metro aims to reflect the values of the local communities in the station aesthetics.

### What changes to the existing bike path along the tracks will be required for this project?

On both the northern and southern side of the tracks, the bike path is built along the rail right-of-way and may require relocation from one side of the tracks to the other in the City of San Fernando. Currently, the bike path travels on the southern side of the tracks from Branford Street in Pacoima to Jessie Street in San Fernando, then on the northern side of the tracks from Jessie Street to Hubbard Avenue in San Fernando. The path then continues again on the southern side of the tracks from Hubbard Avenue to Roxford Street in Sylmar.

## OTHER TRANSIT PROJECTS

### How will the Brighton to Roxford Double Track Project work with the East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor Study Project?

The East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor Study Project (ESFV Project) is a separate Metro project evaluating the feasibility of a new high capacity transit line from the Van Nuys Metro Orange Line Station to the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station. The ESFV Project is studying four alternatives – two Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and two Light Rail Transit (LRT) alternatives. Both of the LRT alternatives being considered would potentially share the existing rail right of way that extends between Van Nuys Boulevard and the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink station. As the ESFV Project moves through the environmental process, planners for the Brighton to Roxford Double Track Project and the ESFV Project will work together to ensure coordination between the two projects.

### Is this project part of the planned high-speed rail project?

No, the double track Project is independent of and is anticipated to advance with or without high-speed rail. This project eliminates an existing bottleneck along the AVL, easing rail traffic congestion by improving the overall flow of Metrolink and UPRR trains. The design of the Project, however, could accommodate the high-speed rail (HSR) project. Currently, the HSR project alternatives for high-speed rail show two of the three alignments as part of the corridor from



## Brighton to Roxford Double Track Project Frequently Asked Questions

as far northwest as the Sheldon Street crossing to the North Burbank Airport Station. A decision on the high-speed rail project is part of a separate environmental process and is expected to be known by December 2017.

### TERMINOLOGY

#### What is a “right-of-way”?

A right-of-way is a strip of land with a certain width reserved for transportation purposes. In many cases, some portions of a right-of-way are owned by the railroad, while others are owned by adjoining property owners and the railroad has an easement, or right to run over a portion of their land. The Brighton to Roxford project area is entirely within Metro-owned right-of-way authorized to build tracks and run trains.

#### What is a “grade crossing”?

A grade crossing or at-grade crossing is an intersection where a railway line crosses a roadway or path at the same level. Warning signals and gates commonly protect cars and pedestrians at grade crossings, and in most cases, the train is required to sound its horn as it approaches the crossing. The Brighton to Roxford Project proposes upgrading a number of local grade crossings in order to prepare the corridor for Quiet Zone designation in order to reduce the noise levels currently experienced by the community.

#### What is a “Quiet Zone”?

A Quiet Zone is a stretch of track where the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) does not require trains to sound their horns as they approach grade crossings. As part of this project, grade crossing improvements will lay the foundation for the establishment of a Quiet Zone in the future. The final designation for a Quiet Zone requires approval by the FRA, and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). Strong support from local and regional elected officials can help facilitate the required multi-agency collaboration.

#### What is the difference between heavy rail and light rail?

Heavy rail is generally associated with diesel-powered passenger trains that are larger and faster than light-rail trains and designed for longer commuting trips with more distance between stations. Examples of heavy rail trains in Los Angeles are Metrolink and Amtrak. These systems are faster, transport more people and can travel faster than a light rail system. Light Rail Transit (LRT) features electric-powered trains that are designed to handle less passengers, but are integrated into the communities they serve, with stations typically about one mile apart. Examples of light rail trains include Metro’s Blue, Green, Gold and Expo Lines. Heavy rail and light rail trains utilize different types of train technology.

### STAY CONNECTED

#### How can I become involved in the process?

Interested parties are encouraged to participate in the public meetings. Public comments and questions outside of the meetings are welcome by phone, email and social media:

Metro Double Track Projects Helpline: 855.SAFE.TRX (855.723.3879)  
Metro Project E-Mail: [regionalrail@metro.net](mailto:regionalrail@metro.net)  
Metro Website: [metro.net/regionalrail](http://metro.net/regionalrail)  
Metro Facebook Page: [facebook.com/regionalrail](https://facebook.com/regionalrail)

#### Can I meet with Metro staff?

Yes, please contact us to request for the Metro team to make a presentation to your group.

#### Who is the lead agency in charge?

The Project is led by Metro, in cooperation with Metrolink. Metro is the lead agency for the required environmental review process.



