Project Overview

The Crenshaw/LAX Transit Project is an 8.5-mile light-rail line, with eight stations, including Leimert Park and Westchester/Veterans. The rail line will run between the Expo Line at Crenshaw Bl and Exposition Bl and the Metro Green Line. It will consist of aerial (La Brea Av/La Cienega Bl and 405 Freeway/Century Bl) and below-grade segments (Exposition Bl to 48th St/59th Pl to 67th St/ Los Angeles International Airport South Runways) with all remaining areas at-grade.

In December 2009, the Metro Board, consisting of thirteen local officials from across L.A. County, selected from the multiple alternatives studied in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) an 8.5 mile light-rail transit (LRT) line to run between the existing Metro Expo Line and Metro Green Line as the project’s locally preferred alternative. In September 2011, the Metro Board of Directors adopted the Crenshaw/LAX Transit Project.

The above actions were the culmination of a prolonged process that started back in 1992 following the Los Angeles riots with a request by Senator Diane Watson and County Supervisor Yvonne Burke to improve the transportation system in the area.

Important intermediate actions between the request from the Senator and the Supervisor and the approval by the Metro Board included: the upgrade of the proposed alternative from a bus rapid system (BRT) with dedicated lanes to a light-rail system was a significant step towards the current project configuration. This upgrade required reallocation of resources from other projects in Los Angeles County to make up the approximately $800 million increase in cost.

The final action that resulted in the current configuration was the addition of two additional stations at Leimert Park (underground station) and Westchester/Veterans (at-grade station). This action also required reallocation of resources and increased the project budget by an additional $135 million.

Metro Board Policy for Grade Separations

Grade separations are a condition that occurs at intersections of streets. The ground (grade) that the train rides along either coincides with the ground of vehicular traffic or is isolated (separated) from it.

With the extensive and aggressive rail program planned for Los Angeles, the Metro Board wished to ensure that all grade separation decisions were made consistently regardless of the location of the work.

With its selection of the Locally Preferred Alternative, the Board ordered a re-analysis of the at-grade section of the Crenshaw/LAX Transit Project. Conducted by an engineering consultant, the analysis found that the project section between 48th and 59th Streets did not require a below-grade separation. This recommendation, publicly presented to the Board on September 16, 2010, relied on the Metro Board’s adopted policy for grade crossings and an independent consultant’s environmental analysis.

Each of the at-grade crossing designs were individually evaluated for pedestrian and motorist safety through the Rail Crossing Hazard Analysis process mandated by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), the entity overseeing rail safety in California.

These evaluations included site visits, engineering evaluations, and extensive participation by and consultation with CPUC and City of Los Angeles staff, members of the public and stakeholder groups. As a result of these evaluations, design modifications were made and mitigation measures taken, which in turn were evaluated in the Safety and Security section of the Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report.

This process confirmed that the proposed design of the at-grade crossings in Park Mesa Heights will be safe for vehicles and pedestrians, and that grade-separating the crossings is impracticable.

CPUC Review of Metro's Proposed Design and Construction

The placement of the at-grade rail line along Crenshaw Bl was approved by the CPUC, the lead compliance agency. The CPUC ruled and asserted that the project is well within compliance with public and industry safety rules and standards in the ruling decision of Metro’s application to construct and operate light rail transit at street level. In addition, the project met California state environmental impact requirements and is implementing appropriate safety mitigations measures. As a result, the Federal Transit Agency issued a Finding of No Significant Impact on September 4, 2012.

In its review of the application filed by Metro, the CPUC asserted the following findings:

> A thorough environmental impact report and a safety hazard was conducted and considered

> The project has mitigated potential impacts and its plan for implementation of safety measures relative to the operation of the light rail line in the at-grade street level is satisfactory
> The project is consistent with Commission and California state safety standards
> Metro has performed appropriate public outreach and stakeholder communications and obtained concurrence from local public, community and emergency entities
> The eventual operation and implementation of safety measures on the rail line is consistent and comparable with previous CPUC approvals of other similar rail lines with at-grade/street level crossings such as the Expo Line, Gold Line and Blue Line.
> At-grade/Street level crossings are a common and often inherent component of light transit lines

Safety Control Measures

In consideration of Metro’s application for the Crenshaw/LAX Transit Project, the CPUC was satisfied and based much of its decision to approve the at-grade street level crossings on the following safety control measures:

> Appropriate visual warning devices
> Protective barriers of rail line
> Audible warning devices
> Traffic signal synchronization
> Speed limit of light-rail train
> Warning measures such as signage to inform stakeholders
> Measures discouraging trespassing

At-Grade vs. Underground

The type of rail line planned in a community is based on a number of different factors including population density, potential ridership, environmental impacts, cost and the physical conditions in the study area. The few corridors that are served or planned to be served by subway projects are among the densest neighborhoods and districts with residents and employment throughout Los Angeles County. These include Downtown Los Angeles, MacArthur Park, Wilshire Center/Koreatown, Hollywood, the Miracle Mile and the Westside through Century City and Westwood.

The Crenshaw/LAX Transit Project is building a line that will be nearly half grade-separated — more than both the Metro Gold Line and Expo Line.

Planning the Crenshaw/LAX Transportation Project

Many different types of transit investment have been planned along the Crenshaw corridor over the decades, including light rail (at-grade and elevated versions), at-grade bus lanes and heavy rail. None of these projects in the past gained enough consensus and/ or funding to move forward into construction.

In addition, at one point, a western extension of the Wilshire Bl subway was contemplated to turn south along Crenshaw for a short segment before turning west along Venice Bl to approach Wilshire Bl again. This alignment was not pursued due to the presence of hydrogen sulfide gas.

In its current form, the Crenshaw/LAX alignment is underground for approximately 2.2 miles out of the 3.2 miles the line runs along Crenshaw Bl. About half of the full line is grade-separated. The existing Metro Gold and Expo Lines are approximately 20 percent grade-separated.

Pedestrian and Motorist Safety During Construction and Operations

Safety is the highest priority on the Crenshaw/LAX Transit Project. Metro has a Crenshaw/LAX Construction Safety Awareness Program, which targets students, seniors and other residents, emphasizing the importance of safe behavior near construction sites.

The completed line will have a multitude of measures which will ensure safe operation. First, the rail line will run with the Crenshaw Bl vehicular traffic and will stop and go as dictated by the signals that control the vehicular traffic. Second, the crosswalks will be timed to allow sufficient time to cross the street. Finally, the fence along both sides of the rail guideway will prevent pedestrians from crossing mid-block and will instead redirect pedestrians to the crosswalks. Historical data from the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) from 2003 to 2014 indicates 24 vehicular/pedestrian injuries from Jaywalking across Crenshaw Bl between 48th and 60th. Many of these accidents occurred mid-block from pedestrians attempting to cross Crenshaw Bl. The new rail line will mitigate some of the pedestrian incidents by redirecting pedestrians to the crosswalks.

Blue Line Safety

The safety lessons learned from the Blue Line — built 25 years ago as the first light-rail line in the country — has been applied to other Metro Rail lines that run at-grade, such as the Gold Line and Expo Line. The experience has paid off. There have been very few incidents on the Gold and Expo Lines, and accidents on the Blue Line have been reduced. The Red, Purple and Green Lines run on exclusive right-of-way and do not feature road crossings.

Line Train Speed on Crenshaw Blvd

When moving at street level, trains on the future line may reach speeds up to 35 mph. The trains are regulated with the same signal system as vehicular traffic and do not have priority over cars running along Crenshaw Bl.

Environmental Benefits

The Crenshaw/LAX Transit Project will bring significant environmental and community benefits, such as offering an alternative transportation option to congested roadways, improved air quality, reduced traffic congestion, reduced noise, economic development, streetscape improvements, reduced fuel consumption and more employment opportunities throughout L.A. County.

> Improved Access The project offers major connections with LAX as well as links to the Metro Green Line, the Expo Line and the countywide bus network.
> **Regional Mobility** The project will improve transit connections to the entire Metro Rail and Bus system and potentially provide relief for the 405 and 110 freeways.

> **Economic Development & Job Creation** The project will provide jobs and community revitalization opportunities in a historically underserved portion of Los Angeles County and is expected to be a significant engine for economic development in the corridor.

### Project Cost

Funding comes mostly through Measure R, a countrywide sales tax initiative approved by voters in 2008. The U.S. Department of Transportation approved a $545.9 million Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan to advance construction of the Crenshaw/LAX Transit Project. The project total cost is $2.058 billion.

- $545.9-million federally-backed TIFIA loan
- Los Angeles City Council: $55 million in Measure R local return money
- Metro: $240 million

### Construction Impact

Construction by its nature has impacts. Metro assigns a dedicated Construction Relations team to each of the projects to assist community members, ensure compliance with environmental requirements and explore ways to mitigate these impacts. Metro is always working to minimize the impact of construction on every day life, but motorists and residents should expect some changes to traffic patterns while the Crenshaw/LAX Transit Project is being built. During this period, visit metro.net/crenshaw frequently to stay on top of lane and parking restrictions, street closures and prohibitions on left or right turns where construction is heaviest.

### Construction Relations

Metro assigns a dedicated Construction Relations team to each of its projects. Construction Relations is responsible for public outreach, stakeholder communication and construction impact coordination. The Construction Relations team has taken proactive steps to lessen construction impacts by conducting business profile surveys with each business on the alignment. The team is fully integrated into the project management structure and co-located with the contractor to prepare the community for construction activities and to coordinate access issues with the contractor. The Contractor is contractually obligated to maintain access at all times.

Dedicated Crenshaw/LAX Transit Project Construction Relations staff members are available to assist businesses and residence along the construction route with any issues or concerns and can provide project information, answer questions and help resolve problems. The project hotline exists to give business owners and residents the ability to ask questions or report problems that may arise during light rail construction, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Please call the project hotline at 213.922.2736 for questions or additional information regarding the Crenshaw/LAX Transit Project.