

# Doran Street and Broadway/Brazil Grade Separation Project

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### 1. What is the Doran Street and Broadway/Brazil Grade Separation Project (Project)?

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is evaluating the development of a grade separation for two at-grade rail crossings in Atwater Village and Glendale which will ultimately improve safety and mobility, and thereby enhancing the quality of life for the surrounding communities. The Doran Street and Broadway/Brazil at-grade rail crossings, located south of State Route 134 (SR-134) and east of Los Angeles River, are critical to Atwater Village and provide a unique challenge of limited access, adjacent industrial uses, and a mix of business and residential interests. However, Doran Street has been identified as one of the most potentially hazardous at-grade rail crossings in Los Angeles County and as one that would most significantly benefit from safety improvements. In fact, the Doran Street at-grade rail crossing has had numerous incidents through the years, resulting in several attempts to permanently close this crossing.

### 2. What are the safety issues facing the Doran Street at-grade crossing?

The Doran Street at-grade rail crossing has been identified as one of the most potentially hazardous crossings in Los Angeles County due to the proximity and configuration with the adjacent signalized intersection causing back-ups resulting in vehicles stalled over of the tracks. In addition, the proximity to a propane gas facility and the high frequency of trains using this rail corridor on a daily basis presents an increased chance for an incident to occur in the project area.

The number of incidents Countywide has continued to increase and with the anticipated future rail traffic increase, the potential for train and vehicle/pedestrian incidents increases significantly. Currently, there are approximately 90 daily Metrolink, Amtrak, and freight trains using this rail corridor with a planned commuter rail service expansion and high-speed trains which could increase future rail traffic by 50%; or up to 135 trains per day. This railroad activity, combined with the residential and business nature of the area and the significant truck and passenger vehicle traffic, presents this as one of the most dangerous crossings in Los Angeles County, and therefore would greatly benefit from safety and access improvements.

### 3. How will the Project address safety concerns?

As part of the Project, Metro is proposing a grade separation connecting San Fernando Road to West San Fernando Road at Salem Street and Sperry Street, respectively. In addition, a connector road that extends West San Fernando Road to the Fairmont Avenue bridge is also being considered as a secondary point of access for first responders and businesses in the area. The combination of these two elements will ultimately allow the closure of the existing at-grade rail crossings at Doran Street and Broadway/Brazil.

Due to the serious safety concerns and urgent need to improve the Doran Street at-grade rail crossing, a California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) order institutes interim improvements to be implemented

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until such time as the grade separation is completed and the crossing can be closed. As such, this at-grade rail crossing will be reconstructed to improve safety. As required by the CPUC, the interim improvements will include signal modifications, a new pedestrian crossing, and a modified roadway for one-way (westbound) use only.

#### 4. Who is leading the project?

This project is being led by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) in cooperation with the cities of Glendale and Los Angeles, Southern California Regional Rail Authority (Metrolink), and California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA).

#### 5. What is an at-grade crossing?

An at-grade crossing is an intersection of railroad tracks with roads and pedestrian/bicycle ways at street level. Vehicles and pedestrians are forced to stop at the crossing while a train travels through the intersection. At-grade crossings have a significant risk of conflicts between trains, trucks, cars, bikes and pedestrians.

#### 6. What is a grade separated crossing?

A grade separated crossing is a physical separation of railroad tracks with roads and pedestrian/bicycle ways. Vehicles and pedestrians are able to freely move under or over a railroad crossing even if a train is traveling through the intersection. Grade separated crossings eliminate conflicts between trains and vehicles.

#### 7. What is the process for identifying the best alternative/solution?

The Project is anticipated to go through four development phases, including: Alternatives Analysis (Phase 1), Environmental Studies & Preliminary Design (Phase 2), Final Design (Phase 3), and Construction (Phase 4). Public involvement is of utmost importance for all agencies and jurisdictions involved, therefore, community outreach will continue through the end of construction to educate, inform and gather input from stakeholders.

The initial phase of the Alternatives Analysis has considered and evaluated a range of alternative concepts that meet the goals of the Project, including concepts previously developed by City of Glendale and California High-Speed Rail Authority. During the Alternatives Analysis process, the proposed alternatives were evaluated across a range of technical and environmental criteria, including the consideration of public feedback, to inform the evaluation and refinement of the alternatives prior to advancing to the environmental phase. Currently, the Fairmont Connector and Salem/Sperry Overpass has been identified as the alternative that best meets the project goals. As a result, staff is proposing recommending this alternative to advance to the environmental and preliminary engineering phase.

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Before advancing to the next phase, the alternative is being further assessed to evaluate the Fairmont Connector as it relates to local traffic impacts to the surrounding neighborhoods.

### 8. Has a preferred alternative been identified?

Three design alternatives were studied as part of the Alternatives Analysis process, including: Doran Overpass; Fairmont Connector and Salem/Sperry Overpass; and Fairmont Connector and Zoo Drive Connector. The alternatives were evaluated across a range of technical and environmental criteria, including the roadway alignment, estimated costs, traffic analysis, preliminary environmental evaluation, and construction and right-of-way impacts.

As part of this process, the Fairmont Connector and Salem/Sperry Overpass was identified and presented to the Metro Board of Directors (Board) as the recommended alternative to advance to the environmental and preliminary engineering phase. The Board approved the recommended alternative, however, asked for further evaluation and alternatives development related to the Fairmont Connector to assess local traffic impacts to the surrounding neighborhoods. Staff has completed a new traffic impacts analysis and intends to discuss their findings at the community meetings in December 2016. The new traffic impact analysis concludes that the most viable solution is a two-way Fairmont Connector since there are likely no other alternatives as effective, which is directly linked to the proposed Salem/Sperry overpass. An update on the recommended alternative with an all or nothing approach will be presented by staff to the Board and, if approved, the alternative will advance into the environmental and final design phases prior to initiating construction.

### 9. Will there be right-of-way impacts?

Yes, there will be some impacts. However, the environmental and preliminary engineering phases of the Project will identify those impacts and mitigation measures to construct the project.

### 10. Will the Doran Street and Broadway/Brazil intersections, as configured now, be closed as part of this project?

Doran Street and Broadway/Brazil are currently at-grade crossings that are undergoing interim improvements. One of the Project's goals is to create a grade separation that will improve safety and access by separating traffic and pedestrians from train crossings. The recommended solution includes the Fairmont Connector and Salem/Sperry Overpass that would close both of these at-grade crossings.

### 11. How will pedestrian access be addressed?

All of the design concepts that were explored for the Project incorporated enhanced pedestrian and bicycle access, where feasible.

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### 12. How is the 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 engineering design. No funding has been identified for the real estate acquisitions and construction. Other funding sources, such as the California High-Speed Rail Authority, are yet to be determined.

### 13. How does the Project relate to the recent improvements to the Broadway/Brazil Crossing?

Substantial upgrades and safety improvements were recently performed for the Broadway/Brazil at-grade rail crossing. Additional operational improvements to this crossing, such as traffic signal modifications, are being discussed with the cities of Glendale and Los Angeles. In addition, similar modifications will be made to the Doran Street crossing as part of the proposed interim improvements to enhance safety and access for this crossing until the Salem/Sperry Overpass and Fairmont Connector improvements are completed which will ultimately result in the closure of the Doran Street and Broadway/Brazil at-grade rail crossings.

### 14. What are the interim improvements for the Doran Street railroad crossing?

In the interim, the Doran Street crossing will be reconstructed to improve safety, including signal modifications, a new pedestrian crossing, and a modified roadway for one-way (westbound) use only. The one-way crossing will address the safety issues resulting from the proximity of the rail tracks to the signalized intersection which leads to the potential for eastbound vehicles on Doran Street to be stopped on the rail tracks. These scheduled modifications resulted from the CPUC order that institutes interim improvements to be implemented until such time as the grade separation is completed and the crossing can be closed.

### 15. When will construction begin on these projects?

Funding for real estate acquisition and construction is yet to be determined.

### 16. How will construction affect travel on San Fernando Road and access to North Atwater Village businesses?

At this time, the level of impact is not known since the proposed alternatives have not been completely evaluated or selected. However, one of the project goals is to develop solutions that minimize disruption to residents, businesses and commuters during construction.

### 17. How will first responder vehicles have access to the north Atwater Village area?

First responder vehicles will be permitted to approach and cross the at-grade rail crossing from any direction even after the completion of the interim improvements to the Doran Street at-grade rail

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crossing. As part of the long term improvements, however, first responder vehicles will have two new points of access once the Salem/Sperry Overpass and Fairmont Connector are completed. These new access points will ultimately allow the closure of the existing at-grade rail crossings at Doran Street and Broadway/Brazil.

### 18. How can I receive additional project information?

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Para información en español, por favor llame al 888.937.4797.

### 19. Can Metro present to our group?

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



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