Westside Subway Extension

Delivering real traffic relief for Southern California
The comments received during the scoping period are incorporated into a Scoping Report and will be used to guide the preparation of the Draft EIS/EIR technical analysis.

We’re going to extend the Purple Line to bring real congestion relief to LA.

Background
In fall 2007, Metro began an Alternatives Analysis study to look at whether a transit improvement was needed on the Westside, and to evaluate a variety of potential options to improve mobility in the area. Following the passage of Measure R, this extensive 18-month effort moved to the next phase in January 2009 when the Metro Board of Directors approved the Alternatives Analysis study and authorized staff to proceed with the next phase of the project — preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIS/EIR) for the Westside Subway Extension. Based on the Alternatives Analysis, the Board approved analyzing two recommended Build alternatives, as well as a No Build and a Transportation Systems Management alternative.

Initiation of the Draft EIS/EIR Phase
In April 2009, Metro initiated the Draft EIS/EIR process with six community Scoping meetings where the two build alternatives — the Wilshire Subway and the Wilshire/West Hollywood Subway — plus the No Build and Transportation Systems Management options were presented to the public. Metro invited comments on these alternatives and the issues to be studied in the Draft EIS/EIR. Over three hundred comments were received by the conclusion of the scoping period.

The most frequent comments:

> There was overwhelming support for the subway.
> Many people wanted to accelerate the schedule for project implementation and to build as much of the full Wilshire/West Hollywood alternative as possible.
> There was a desire to connect the subway with other existing and planned transit corridors.
> Construction impacts and ways to potentially mitigate them were identified as issues of importance.
> There were questions about tunneling under private property.
> Questions related to parking at or around stations were raised.
> Station-specific comments were provided, particularly with regard to the optional Crenshaw station and the potential for a station west of the I-405 freeway.
> Questions were also raised regarding traffic impacts during construction and once the subway is built.

We’re going to extend the Purple Line to bring real congestion relief to LA.
What are the two alignment options being considered?

Wilshire Subway

[Map showing alignment options with station names such as Wilshire/La Cienega, Expo/Crenshaw, Expo/La Brea, etc.]

Wilshire/West Hollywood Subway

[Map showing alignment options with station names such as Wilshire/Beverly, Expo/Crenshaw, Expo/La Brea, etc.]
Refinement of the Alternatives

With your help, Metro has refined the extension’s route alternatives.

**Century City Station**
Initially, three potential locations for stations in Century City were identified: (1) an east-west oriented station under Santa Monica Bl at the north end of Century City; (2) an east-west oriented station under Constellation Bl, close to the center of Century City; and, (3) a north-south oriented station under Avenue of the Stars between Constellation & Santa Monica boulevards. The station site under Avenue of the Stars was eliminated because it resulted in a longer, more costly tunnel alignment with increased travel time for transit riders. The Santa Monica and Constellation boulevard alternatives are being carried forward for further analysis in the Draft EIS/EIR.

**Westwood Station**
Initially, two potential station locations were considered in the Westwood/UCLA area: (1) a station near the intersection of Wilshire and Westwood boulevards; and, (2) a station under Le Conte Av near the Westwood Bl entrance to UCLA. As a result of scoping, a north-south oriented station under Westwood Bl, north of Wilshire was also evaluated. Both The Le Conte Av and north-south aligned Westwood Bl station locations have been dropped from further consideration because they presented two difficulties; specifically, (1) they would both result in the subway tunnel having to proceed west under the Veterans’ Cemetery and (2) greater potential construction impacts in Westwood Village. A new potential location for a Westwood station has been identified under the UCLA-owned parking lot on the north side of Wilshire Bl near Gayley Av. The Wilshire/Westwood and UCLA Lot sites are being carried forward for further analysis in the Draft EIS/EIR.
West Los Angeles Stations (West of the I-405)

At the April 2009 scoping meetings, Metro staff discussed that the subway would likely be built in segments. There was a great deal of interest expressed during those meetings that the segment to Westwood should extend at least one station west of the 405 freeway rather than end in Westwood Village. Initially, Wilshire/Bundy had been identified as the first station west of the 405 freeway. Subsequently, additional station possibilities were identified: at the VA Hospital, Wilshire/Federal and at Wilshire/Barrington.

Following a review of these options, the Westwood/VA Hospital site has been selected as having the best potential to serve as an initial station west of the 405 in combination with the Westwood/UCLA station. The Westwood/VA Hospital station provides the potential opportunity to include a park-and-ride facility and it serves an important regional destination. Therefore, the Westwood/VA Hospital site is being further evaluated in the Draft EIS/EIR to be an initial station west of the 405. A Wilshire/Bundy station will also continue to be evaluated as part of a later segment that would extend the subway to Santa Monica should additional funding beyond Measure R be identified.

West Hollywood Alignment

The Wilshire/West Hollywood Subway alternative presented to the public in April included two alignment options. In both cases, the alignment would extend from the Hollywood/Highland Metro Red Line station down Highland Av to Santa Monica Bl. Under one option, the line would then turn south down La Cienega Bl to tie into the Wilshire subway. With the second option, the line would turn south at San Vicente Bl also to tie into the Wilshire subway. The San Vicente alignment is now being recommended as the one to proceed into the Draft EIS/EIR because it results in a better station location in the western part of West Hollywood.

We are also studying 2 potential locations for the Wilshire/La Cienega station. During scoping, only the location directly at that intersection was proposed. This would require patrons on a West Hollywood alignment to travel to Wilshire/Beverly and transfer if they wanted to head east. Some commenters asked if we could provide this transfer option at La Cienega. We will now also evaluate another potential station location that would allow this. It would be located to the west, between La Cienega and Robertson.

Other Refinements

For those locations where there is still more than one possible station site, Metro is proceeding with additional engineering and environmental studies to select the best station location. We are also continuing to refine the alignments between the stations. Detailed planning of the stations is also underway to identify locations for station entrances and other station details. Further, many of the details related to construction, such as where construction staging will occur and where tunneling machines will be lowered into the ground and earth removed, are also under consideration.

The required “No Build” Alternative includes all existing highway and transit services, along with the planned highway and transit projects for which funding has been identified through 2035. The Draft EIS/EIR must also consider the Transportation Systems Management Alternative, which enhances the No Build Alternative and improves upon existing Metro Rapid Bus service and local bus service in the Westside Subway Extension study area.
What can be expected at the conclusion of the draft EIS/EIR?

The purpose of the Draft EIS/EIR is to study the potential effects of the project during construction and once it is operating, and also to evaluate measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate any adverse impacts. As a part of this effort, Metro will further refine the project alternatives, define initial Wilshire Bl segment(s) that can be built with the funding from Measure R, specify station details, examine the cost effectiveness of various segments and evaluate the timing and funding for a future project. It will also identify potential future segments that could be built if they are determined to be cost-effective and additional funding can be identified. The study must also evaluate Minimum Operable Segments. The Minimum Operable Segments that will be evaluated are extensions from Wilshire/Western to: (1) Fairfax, (2) Century City, (3) Westwood/405 and (4) Westwood/405 plus the West Hollywood connection. The Study will also evaluate the entire alignment to Santa Monica both with and without the West Hollywood component. The West Hollywood segment, as well as the segment beyond West LA to Santa Monica, do not currently have funding identified. At the conclusion of the Draft EIS/EIR, the Metro Board will be asked to adopt a Locally Preferred Alternative defining the project that can be built within anticipated funding and that will move forward into the Final EIS/EIR process. The adopted Locally Preferred Alternative will identify the project for which Metro will seek federal matching funds.

What’s next?

During the next 18 months, Metro will:

> Conduct public meetings, approximately quarterly, to present the results from the previous meetings and report updates on the additional refinements and analysis

> Schedule station area meetings to focus on planning and urban design around the stations

> Schedule public hearings on the Draft EIS/EIR to present the study conclusions including the recommended Locally Preferred Alternative

The Draft EIS/EIR is scheduled to be released for public review in mid-2010. It is anticipated that the Metro Board will be asked to approve the Draft EIS/EIR and adopt a Locally Preferred Alternative in late 2010. Approximately one year would be needed to complete the Final EIS/EIR after that.

Comment & stay involved.

The Draft EIS/EIR scoping period is closed, but Metro continues to invite comments on the alternatives. Comments may be submitted in a number of ways as follows:

> Provide verbal comments at Public Update Meetings

> Complete a written comment form at Public Update Meetings

> Mail comment form or letter to:
  David Mieger
  Metro
  One Gateway Plaza
  Mail Stop 99-22-5
  Los Angeles, CA 90012

> Comment on-line: Go to “Contact Us” at metro.net/westside

> Email to WestsideExtension@metro.net

> Post comments on our Facebook group, “Metro Westside Subway Extension”

For additional information, to be added to our project mailing list or to schedule a meeting for your group or organization, please go to the study web site, call our Information Line at 213.922.6934 or find us on Facebook: “Metro Westside Subway Extension.”