



Metro

Board Report

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation
Authority
One Gateway Plaza
3rd Floor Board Room
Los Angeles, CA

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REVISED
EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 16, 2025

Motion by:

DIRECTORS HAHN, DUTRA, AND SOLIS

Malabar Yard Mitigations and Continued Collaboration Motion

The Malabar Yard Project is a component of the broader Link Union Station expansion, which aims to upgrade Los Angeles Union Station and accommodate anticipated increases in passenger rail demand and improve rail service for communities across Los Angeles County. The full build out of the project includes the addition of eight new tracks, a wider concourse, and long-overdue platform modifications. These changes are intended to support future regional rail initiatives, such as the D Line Extension, the Southeast Gateway Line, and the California High-Speed Rail project.

To make space for these improvements, the BNSF West Bank Yard must be repurposed for passenger rail and shared infrastructure. This change will remove freight rail storage tracks at that BNSF West Bank location, and to offset that loss, Metro and the California High-Speed Rail Authority have proposed improvements at BNSF's Malabar Yard in the City of Vernon. While these improvements are necessary for the broader project, they will also bring real impacts to local businesses in Vernon. Some businesses are concerned about added rail traffic affecting circulation and operations, while others face partial or full land acquisitions. The proposal also requires City of Vernon approval of new at-grade crossings and partial acquisition of a public street. Metro has already committed to nearly \$25 million in mitigation measures for traffic monitoring and mobility improvements in the City of Vernon, but Many business owners and community members who live, work, and attend school in Vernon still worry that additional train movements to and from the Los Angeles Junction Railway will compound congestion, delay emergency response, and increase air emissions and noise throughout the city.

Moreover, the Malabar Yard is located one block away from the City's only school, which serves Vernon and the disadvantaged community of Huntington Park, and a Catholic parish dedicated to serving the deaf community. While these sensitive uses are outside of the project's draft study area, they will experience increased rail activity at the Malabar Yard, underscoring the need for targeted investments and mitigation measures that deliver lasting benefits. The City of Vernon believes there are less impactful alternatives to address BNSF's rail storage needs, but achieving a viable outcome will depend on BNSF's willingness to engage in a collaborative problem-solving process.

For these reasons, Metro must continue to work with impacted businesses and community members and continue its partnership with BNSF to find solutions. This will help ensure that the project advances in a way that both strengthens our regional rail system and respects the needs of local business communities.

SUBJECT: MALABAR YARD MITIGATIONS AND CONTINUED COLLABORATION MOTION

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE Motion by Hahn, Dutra and Solis that the Board direct the Chief Executive Officer to:

- A. Collaborate with BNSF to explore any other alternative solutions for rail storage that may have fewer impacts, while still meeting their operational needs;
- B. Convene meetings with BNSF and the City of Vernon to secure written commitments, where possible, that include:
 - 1. Limiting future rail operations to non-peak or nighttime hours;
 - 2. Ensuring any increased train activity stays below a mutually agreed-upon threshold;
 - 3. Capping train lengths at levels acceptable to both the City of Vernon and BNSF;
- C. Coordinate with BNSF and California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA), as the NEPA lead agency, to consider reaching an agreement to implement and operate this mitigation measure in the City of Vernon after the elimination of tracks at the West Bank Yard;
- D. Continue collaboration with the City of Vernon and the Vernon Chamber of Commerce to incorporate design strategies and mitigations that reduce disruptions to local businesses and their operations;
- E. Coordinate with the City of Vernon's traffic engineering and public safety departments to:
 - 1. Develop and implement traffic management plans that prevent congestion and circulation issues caused by rail activity;
 - 2. Ensure emergency service routes remain fully accessible and are not adversely affected post-implementation;
- F. Coordinate with schools, churches and other sensitive receptors to minimize potential impacts of new train patterns on those uses;
- G. Explore any opportunities to incorporate eligible businesses into Metro's Business Interruption Fund, during construction of the project (BIF); and
- H. Maintain close coordination with BNSF and the City of Vernon to ensure full transparency

throughout all phases of project planning, design, and implementation.

SOLIS AMENDMENT: That the Board of Directors direct the CEO to draft a letter to be signed by Metro Board members and sent to BNSF, copying Los Angeles County's state and federal representatives, urging BNSF to engage in collaborative discussions and a formal agreement with the City of Vernon and cooperate with mediation requests.