

ATTACHMENT D – SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Summary of the viewpoints and concerns expressed by over 400 public comments are noted below:

1. Nearly all commenters expressed that the City of Claremont voters supported Measure M and the new Gold Line station and never anticipated that post-measure M's passage, there would be a possibility of losing their current Metrolink station. They want both the Claremont Metrolink Station and the new Foothill Gold Line station in the City of Claremont.
2. Nearly all expressed that the light rail / Gold Line and intercity Commuter Rail (Metrolink) serve two entirely different purposes, particularly in this area of the County. Both are important and necessary in this area towards achieving goals of improved air quality, reducing road congestion, and providing options to public transit riders.
3. Many expressed that their station is at the heart of their community and that they had worked hard for many years to secure this station. This station is now a central part of the town's character and it is regarded as a critical asset for getting to and from the City of Claremont and to many other destinations in L.A. and San Bernardino Counties, and throughout Southern CA.
4. Nearly all commenters indicated that they would have never supported Measure M if they thought there was a chance they could lose their Claremont Metrolink Station.
5. Many commenters expressed that any closure of the Claremont station will result in severe distrust in government and in administrative processes and would undermine the confidence of the public in the government.
6. Several commenters indicated that the concept of potentially eliminating the Metrolink station had never been considered in any of their municipal or regional planning. When residents, commuters, and local area stakeholders found out in September that the Metro Board was conducting a study to consider eliminating this station, they were shocked and disappointment for what they viewed as a sudden change in plans.
7. Many comments expressed concerns that local business owners and local residents will experience negative impacts to their businesses if their station is eliminated because many rely on clients and customers who can easily walk to their downtown business locations upon arrival to the Claremont station.
8. Many stressed the importance of the Claremont Metrolink Station to supporting the vitality of the City and the entire region, Claremont's long-standing commitment to be a sustainable city with multiple modes of low polluting transportation options, including easy access to the station through safe biking and walking paths. One commenter cited that their station contributes to the City's 98 out of 100 "Walk Score" and indicated that this is exceptionally high compared to the other nearby stations.
9. Many commenters expressed that as the population is aging, many people are facing an increased risk of getting a disability, diminishing their ability to drive and increasing their reliance on the Claremont station and all modes of public transportation. It was mentioned that seniors from Pilgrim Place and other retirement communities depend on the convenient access to Claremont station. Many students, families, and younger people who are proactively seeking ways to reduce their reliance on cars expressed their strong support for keeping the station. For

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these reasons, most expressed that more rail service and transit options in Claremont are desired at this time, not less.

10. Several Seniors and disabled riders with medical conditions expressed that they rely on the safe and seamless entry onto the train from the Claremont Station and often do not need any extra assistance from caretakers, paratransit services, or medical assistants to access the train at this station. Many cited the comfortable and spacious train cars that can easily accommodate their walkers, wheelchairs, and medical support equipment. The Seniors cited the convenient access to restrooms in the Metrolink trains and indicated that they would not be able to ride transit without reliable access to the bathrooms and comfortable train chairs.
11. A few Senior and Disabled commenters cited the importance of keeping the Claremont Station open because Dial-A-Ride and Access Services paratransit service providers cannot cross County lines to drop off riders at the Montclair Station (in San Bernardino County). These commenters expressed serious concerns about the significant disruption this would cause in the daily lives of many seniors and disabled public transit riders. One commenter indicated that Ridership on the Metrolink system doesn't account for "Access Card" riders which allows for free rides on Metrolink within L.A. County for these paratransit customers. These "Access Card" customers don't have to declare their origin starting point. There may be more riders dependent on the Claremont Station than the Study numbers currently indicate for this reason.
12. The Presidents of five local area colleges as well as the Presidents of two Graduate Schools in the area submitted a letter expressed strong support for keeping the Claremont Metrolink Station open. Their letter cited that students, faculty, and professors rely on the Claremont Station to get to campus, internships, job interviews, medical appointments, work, and to explore museums and other cultural venues in Little Tokyo, Downtown L.A., and across the region. They cited that approximately 50% of the students at these local colleges benefit from financial aid programs and affordable public transportation within safe and easy walking distance and many are international students and don't own their own cars.
13. Other commenters expressed wanting to keep their car usage minimal or maintain their car-free lifestyle to avoid traffic congestion and reduce pollution and emissions. Many cited the benefit of the tables, extra space, the "Quiet Cars" to study and do their work over longer distances and many others cited the ease of getting to LAX with large luggage using the Claremont Station.
14. Many commenters expressed their reliance on the Claremont Station providing easy access to the San Bernardino Line to regularly commute to Cal State LA, El Monte, Baldwin Park, Covina and other areas that the Foothill Gold Line does not service. Others expressed that they currently rely on the Claremont Station to commute to the University of Redlands, UC Riverside, Cal State Long Beach, and West Los Angeles in conjunction with relatively seamless bus and/or Light Rail connections. A few expressed that they would like to increasingly rely on access to the Claremont Station for purposes of work commuting or visiting areas in San Bernardino County, in addition to commuting into Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Diego and other areas across the Southern CA region.
15. Many commented that the close proximity of the Claremont Station to Claremont's downtown village is the key to what makes this station so appealing and viable. Several expressed that they had made life decisions based on the existence of this station. Some bought property or

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established their business in town to ensure close proximity and easy walking distance to the station.

16. Several expressed that the money savings resulting in this station's closure would be uncertain or likely minimal compared to the amount of revenue the City will make by keeping the Metrolink Station available. Others expressed that they want their tax monies to go towards keeping the station open and don't want any of their tax monies spent on efforts or studies aimed at closing it.
17. Many commented that closure of the station would not result in much time savings for the commuter but would create a significant inconvenience for current Claremont station users who will be more likely to drive than take public transit if the station is eliminated.
18. Several expressed concerns that closure of the Claremont station would result in significantly longer commute times due to the additional time that would be needed for making their necessary bus connections, especially during off-peak commute times when buses don't run as frequently. These commenters expressed the need for a more comprehensive assessment that accounts for necessary walk times and bus connections related to any potential Claremont station closure if this study were to advance any further.
19. A couple of commenters expressed that keeping the Metrolink station in Claremont is consistent with the statewide vision for growth which promotes walkable communities that are co-located near transit. They cited that this vision is also consistent with the Statewide Housing Assessment, California Transportation Plan 2040 and The Governor's Environmental Goals and Policy Report. And, sustainable Claremont's letter cited the importance to human health, the environment, and overall quality of life as a few of their reasons for supporting keeping the station.
20. Many commenters expressed that the Claremont Station is the most walkable station on the line and greatly enhances the destination amenities served by the line. Many residents cited they had moved to Claremont in large part due to the existing Claremont Metrolink Station and ease of transfer to Amtrak and other rail options at Union Station.
21. Several expressed that they had purchased their homes in large part due to the existing station and are concerned that their property values would decrease if this station were to be eliminated.
22. Many cited that removal of the station would undermine years of planning and advocacy by the City and the local residents that fought to secure the Claremont Station and related Transit Oriented Development Planning. The City has promoted housing and transit oriented development projects in their existing transit corridor.
23. Most expressed concerns that removing a station would be a major step backward compared to Metro's stated goals during Measure M and post Measure M in which an emphasis has been placed on the need for multi-modal transportation options and improved livability, mobility, and community building.

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24. The Claremont Chamber of Commerce's letter along with many others expressed that the Claremont station supports many residents and transit riders' goals of maintaining a city that functions as both a destination and a transit center. They feel strongly that their current station is located in a vibrant city center with museums, parks, galleries, libraries, colleges, a movie theater, restaurants, shops and services.
25. Most commenters expressed that transit use and their existing station benefits the entire region as they cited the ability to get to key cultural and destination places in Los Angeles, including the Pantages through connecting with the Redline.
26. Others cited using the Claremont Metrolink Station to get to L.A. Union Station and from there, walking to the Times, to the Broad, to Grand Central Station, to MOCA, and to other key locations throughout Los Angeles. They also cited the ability to travel without a car westward to Santa Barbara and further inland to experience other Counties in Southern CA on the weekend or for regular work commuting.
27. Many commenters expressed their concerns regarding an apparent lack of compelling reasons to shut down a viable station that they believe serves the diverse needs of so many people. They view the anticipated \$40 million dollar one-time savings as a high price to pay, given the resulting loss of convenient and easily accessible transit service for current riders and local residents and associated negative potential impacts on the environment.
28. Several expressed frustration with the process (or, lack of process) employed to date for considering a potential closure of their existing station.
29. Some commenters expressed that if this question regarding potential closure of the Claremont station is considered any further, they would want a comprehensive regional plan and a more robust technical study to identify all potential impacts.
30. A few commenters urged agency staff to consider how to make access and ridership from the Claremont station even more robust and ensure more multimodal connections at this station rather than consider removal of the station and reducing their transit options.
31. A few expressed the need for more comprehensive plans to include consideration of Gold Line, Metrolink, bike, pedestrian plans, car/bus, potential electric autonomous shuttles, etc. Instead of considering the impacts to closing the station, these commenters urged the agencies to consider how to make their station more robust and connected with multimodal transportation options with the other three towns in the area.
32. A couple of commenters referenced that their kids did not need a car during college due to easy access to the Metrolink train station. This saved their families considerable expense and worry.
33. Several indicated that they would not feel comfortable dropping off their kids at the Montclair station very early in the morning or having them walk the extra mile along the somewhat deserted Montclair to Claremont bike trail.

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34. While a few cited riding their bike along Foothill Blvd. and elsewhere in Claremont, they consider the bike route to Montclair with few protections and many dangers - especially for commuters who are biking or walking alone during dawn, dusk or night.
35. Several commenters expressed their increased comfort level of safety waiting alone at the Claremont station in the early morning or late at night compared to the other local station alternative, resulting in their willingness to take public transit from Claremont instead of drive.
36. Nearly all commenters expressed great concern and strong opposition to the anticipated 5 year period of no rail station or rail service in their town should their current station be eliminated. They are untrusting that there would a consistent and equally convenient shuttle to run to Montclair.
37. Many commenters are also concerned about the additional time the shuttle alternative would add to their total commute time and the tax payer dollars associated with funding this “free” shuttle service concept.
38. Commenters will also want to know what would be the additional taxpayer costs associated with updating the Foothill Gold Line Extension EIR document to reflect elimination of the Metrolink station and ask that that any further studies assess any impacts from 5 years of proposed alternative shuttle service due to station closure.
39. Others want to know if there will be a charge for station parking with or without Metrolink station elimination and if Foothill Transit will increase bus services.
40. In the event of a Claremont station closure, a few expressed concerns about any potential increase in their Metrolink fare if they are redirected to catch the train in Montclair instead of in Claremont to get to Downtown LA.
41. A few commenters expressed that rather than saving costs through elimination of the Claremont Station, perhaps costs could be reduced by eliminating a proposed bridge and/or grade separation elements. A couple of other commenters expressed strong support for the grade separation and bridge near Indian Hill and think it is necessary for safety to avoid pedestrian fatalities.
42. Others expressed concerns that College Ave. and Claremont Blvd. will be difficult to utilize due to an increased number of trains and that closure of their station would exacerbate the inconveniences, creating disproportionately negative impacts to their town.
43. Several expressed concerns about the possibility of increased transit station parking costs with the arrival of the Gold Line.
44. A few commenters expressed that if this study were to progress further, Metro, the City, and the other agencies involved need to be in close coordination with the City of Montclair and San Bernardino County to ensure they are also aware of any potential impacts related to the potential closure of the Claremont station and any impacts associated with the suggested shuttling of people over to Montclair. Other commenters expressed doubt that there is

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adequate funding available for the operations and maintenance of the Foothill Gold Line extending into Montclair.

45. One commenter indicated that if Claremont were to become the terminus for the Foothill Gold Line Light Rail, then operational space and flexibility will be needed in Claremont to ensure seamless transfer of passengers from one service to another.
46. Another comment explained that there should be a guarantee that if the current station is eliminated, there will be a reliable shuttle service to both Montclair and Pomona North stations so that Claremont station users can count on being able to access current Metrolink and future Redlands Arrow Services. The importance of keeping the platform at Claremont in place for any potential future offloading or unloading of passengers on an as-needed basis, even if not all trains stop at this location in the future, was also emphasized.

Two commenters out of over 400 total comments support closure of the Claremont Metrolink Station and cited the following reasons:

1. Save \$40 M with relocation of the Metrolink station since there are available Metrolink stations in nearby Montclair and North Pomona.
2. Any “wasted funds” by Metro will be highly criticized by those that are concerned about government spending that could otherwise be spent towards essential infrastructure that meets the needs of regular transit users.
3. A majority of Claremont residents may not even be occasional Metrolink riders and will not be affected at all by the station closure.
4. Foothill Transit Bus from Claremont to Downtown L.A. is regarded as a better service and a great alternative option compared to the continued usage of the Claremont Metrolink station to get to Downtown LA and accommodate disabled and ADA needs .
5. More multimodal connections are available at the Montclair station that the public can benefit from compared to what is currently available at Claremont Metrolink Station.
6. It was cited that approximately 90% of the people who live between Los Angeles and San Bernardino would still be closer to a Metrolink station if the Claremont station were to be eliminated. The nearby Metrolink stations provide adequate access to the system without the Claremont station option.
7. Free shuttle service would be offered between Claremont and Montclair station during construction of The Gold Line and in conjunction with the existing bus connections for Claremont residents (Foothill Transit’s Line 188 and Claremont’s Dial-a-Ride).
8. There is a dedicated bikeway which already connects the two stations, further off-setting any inconvenience from the elimination of the Claremont stop.
9. The current Express Bus that serves the Claremont station to get to downtown was referenced by this commenter as more comfortable, cheaper, more flexible, and often faster (when the total commute time is considered beyond Union Station).
10. Some Claremont commuters may be willing to sacrifice a few minutes of travel time to save more than \$100 a month to take the bus or the Gold Line.
11. In the long run, the Metrolink may only be viable as an express service for long-distance commuters, with fewer stops in communities which are already served by cheaper and faster transit options. Claremont is on the fringe of that zone and for this reason, it could be a waste of money to invest \$40 M in what is viewed as only a marginally useful resource which may become obsolete due to more people switching over to the less expensive Gold Line option (or utilizing express bus options, etc.).

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12. Riders who drive their personal vehicle to the station will only need to drive an extra minute or two to reach the Montclair or Pomona North stations.
13. Montclair has acres of unused parking capacity. Claremont could potentially repurpose their existing Metrolink parking lot for affordable housing or for other beneficial purposes.

Other Issues of Concern:

While nearly all of the commenters expressed that they do not want the Metrolink Station eliminated from Claremont, many indicated that if a potential station elimination is to be pursued any further by the Metro Board, the scope of the current study would need to become much more comprehensive in order to address many of the questions and concerns raised from this initial assessment (as summarized in this appendix). Several expressed the need for a more comprehensive study that takes into consideration the walking and bus connection travel times associated with any closure of the Claremont Station. Others expressed the importance of ensuring the CA State Rail Plan, High Speed Rail Plans, and other plans that have assumed ongoing activity at this current Claremont Metrolink station are taken into account. A few expressed the importance of doing a pricing sensitivity analysis across LA County and the SCAG region to ensure a rational and unified fare policy. Per feedback submitted from the local residents and stakeholders to date, a more robust and comprehensive inventorying of all potential economic impacts associated with the closure of the station (such as economic impacts to the local businesses near the station, impacts to property owners that intentionally purchased their homes and property within very short walking distance to the Metrolink station) would need to be considered. Lastly, a more thorough breakdown of who uses the existing Metrolink station (including data to show numbers of casual travelers and transit/Metrolink dependent travelers) and a clearer assessment of the costs associated with conducting a more comprehensive study would be of great interest to the community before any next steps are taken to advance this concept of a potential Claremont Metrolink station closure any further.