



Board Report

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Agenda Number: 14.

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE SEPTEMBER 19, 2018

SUBJECT: GREEN LINE EXTENSION TO TORRANCE

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION

CONSIDER:

- A. RECEIVING AND FILING the Green Line Extension to Torrance Supplemental Alternative Analysis (SAA) Report; and
- B. AUTHORIZING the CEO to carry forward the following two build alternatives (modified):
 - 1. Alternative 1: Metro right-of-way (ROW) and overcrossing, without a station at Manhattan/Inglewood
 - 2. Alternative 3: Hawthorne to 190th Street, without a station at Hawthorne/166th Street; and
- C. AUTHORIZING the CEO to initiate the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) for the two build alternatives as modified.

ISSUE

With the passage of Measure M in November 2016, which included funding for the Green Line Extension to Torrance Project (Project), Metro reinitiated the planning studies for the Project in spring 2017 with this SAA. The SAA is focused on a 4.5-mile segment of the Harbor Subdivision ROW from the existing Redondo Beach (Marine Avenue) Station to the Torrance Transit Center (TC), currently under construction by City of Torrance.

Its goal was to gain consensus on a revised Alternative(s) for presentation to and approval by the Metro Board to be carried forward in the next phase of environmental studies. Attachment A contains the Executive Summary, inclusive of goals, performance, travel and cost information. The full report is available on the project website: <https://www.metro.net/projects/green-line-extension/> The SAA recommends two alternatives to be carried forward for environmental analysis. Board action is needed in order to proceed forward with the environmental analysis. The Measure M groundbreaking date is Fiscal Year (FY) 2026.

BACKGROUND

Measure M Project Description

The Project is identified in Measure M as an extension of the existing Metro Green Line light rail transit (LRT) to Crenshaw Boulevard in Torrance. The exact project description of all projects set forth in the Measure M ordinance are to be defined by the environmental process, which includes features such as termini, alignment and stations. Per Measure M and Metro's 2009 Long-Range Transportation Plan (as amended), the Project has an \$891 million (2015\$) allocation based on the cost estimate that was current at the time that the Measure M Expenditure Plan was approved.

Relatedly, the Project is also included in Metro's "Twenty-Eight by '28 Initiative" project list as an aspirational project schedule to be completed in time for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Los Angeles. Therefore, efforts are being made to achieve an early project delivery; this July 2018 Board action would facilitate efforts for project acceleration.

History

Metro completed an Alternatives Analysis (AA) Study in 2009, which studied transit alternatives along the Metro ROW between downtown Los Angeles, Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. The AA identified the Green Line Extension from Redondo Beach to Torrance, utilizing the Metro ROW, as the highest-priority project. Light rail transit (LRT) was identified as the preferred mode. Metro initiated a Draft EIS/EIR in 2010, studying the potential environmental benefits and impacts of the alternatives prioritized in the AA. The Draft EIS/EIR studied No Build, Transportation Systems Management, and LRT Alternative along the ROW. After the failure of Measure J in 2012, this Draft EIS/EIR was put on hold due to funding concerns.

After the passage of Measure M, Metro reinitiated the planning studies for the Green Line Extension to Torrance Project in spring 2017 with the SAA. This SAA study focused on soliciting feedback from corridor cities and stakeholders to refine and update alternatives previously identified in the 2009 Alternatives Analysis and 2010 to 2012 Draft EIR/EIS.

Metro reviewed the conditions described in the earlier analysis and began an outreach process to stakeholders and cities in the South Bay to identify and evaluate any major new changes, opportunities or concerns since the Project was paused in 2012 before initiating the environmental analysis. To address these, Metro agreed to conduct an SAA, expanding the range of alternatives under consideration beyond the single Right-of-Way (ROW) Alternative. This SAA also allowed Metro to update existing conditions of the Project area, which have changed since the earlier analysis began in 2010.

Throughout 2017, the Metro project team used multiple iterations of feedback from cities and stakeholders to guide the evaluation of additional light rail alternatives for consideration. As a result, the Metro project team proposed various alignment and design options between the existing Redondo Beach Station and the Torrance Transit Center (TC). Based on that iterative outreach process and further technical analysis, four Build Alternatives were prepared for analysis in the SAA.

DISCUSSION

As part of the SAA, the four alternatives were analyzed, two of which are within Metro's existing

ROW. These four Build Alternatives are shown in Attachment B. Alternatives under consideration include:

- Alternatives within the existing Metro ROW
 - Alternative 1: Metro ROW and Overcrossing
 - Alternative 2: Metro ROW and Undercrossing
- Alternatives that travel down the median of Hawthorne Boulevard for various lengths:
 - Alternative 3: Hawthorne to 190th Street
 - Alternative 4: Hawthorne to Artesia

Each alternative would share the same alignment approximately south of 190th Street and terminate at a station serving the Torrance TC.

Community Engagement

Outreach efforts conducted throughout the SAA process included stakeholder meetings; tours for residents and elected officials to experience areas of the Metro Rail system similar to the proposed Project; and community meetings. Community input received from each of these outreach efforts is summarized in the SAA document, and all public comments received are included in Appendix B of the SAA report. These comments have been reviewed by Metro staff and are an important factor in the recommendations to the Metro Board of Directors regarding which alternative(s) to advance to the environmental review phase. Outreach conducted during this period included the following:

1. **Stakeholder meetings:** Two rounds of stakeholder meetings were conducted to seek feedback on alternatives.
2. **Community Tours:** In spring 2018, Metro invited residents, stakeholders, and elected officials from the Project area to tour the Metro Rail system. Three tours were conducted that focused on locations along the Metro Gold Line and Expo Line. The tours highlighted stations or segments of rail lines which have similar local conditions to the proposed Project. Attendees expressed interest in Metro rail projects, community integration, and environmental impacts such as safety and noise.
3. **Community Meetings:** In April-May 2018, Metro held four community meetings. These workshops included a presentation from Metro, a public comment period, and an open house where attendees could speak with project team staff, write comments directly on a roll-plot map of the alternatives, and submit comment cards.

Throughout the duration of the SAA study, a total of 580 comments were collected. A breakdown of the number of comments collected via each method is included in Appendix B of the SAA. Not all comments received expressed a preference for a specific alternative. Attendees generally expressed support for Alternatives 1 and 3, and voiced concerns over a station in City of Lawndale. The community showed limited support for Lawndale Station at Manhattan/Inglewood due to its proximity to Redondo Beach/Marine Station, impact to business, lack of parking and traffic concerns. The community expressed similar concerns for station at Hawthorne/166th Street and its proximity to South Bay Galleria Station. Other concerns included aesthetics, noise, property impacts, safety, and traffic. Attachment E includes comment letters received from Cities of Lawndale and Redondo and

South Bay Service Council.

Recommended Alignments

Based on the technical evaluation in the SAA and public/stakeholder input, staff recommends two alternatives to be carried forward into the EIR/EIS for further analysis and refinement.

The four alternatives were evaluated based on how well they addressed the qualitative Project goals as well as key, quantitative performance factors. The Project goals are intended to qualitatively guide the overall planning process and serve as one of several performance measurement tools.

Attachment C summarizes how each alignment qualitatively performed when compared to the goals. The Project goals are:

- provide mobility improvements;
- minimize environmental impacts;
- support local and regional land use plans and policies;
- ensure cost effectiveness and financial feasibility; and
- ensure equity.

In addition to the Project goals, staff also quantitatively evaluated each alternative against key performance factors (Attachment D). These factors, which aim to capture the customer impact and experience, are compared for each alignment below.

	Daily Boardings	New Riders	Travel Time (min)	ROM* Cost Estimate (2017 \$ M)	Cost per New Rider (2017 \$)***
Alt 1: ROW Overcrossing	10,340	4,570	7	\$893	\$614
Alt 2: ROW Undercrossing	10,340	4,570	7	\$1,094	\$753
Alt 3: Hawthorne to 190th St	10,640	4,400	9	\$1,003 to 1,220**	\$717
Alt 4: Hawthorne to Artesia	10,630	4,590	8.5	\$1,123	\$769
	* Rough Order of Magnitude Cost Estimate **Additional cost of grade separation at Redondo Beach Blvd and Artesia Blvd (further analysis required) *** Cost per new rider = Project Cost/New Riders				

Attachment F includes a map of the two recommended alternatives. These alignments also represent a reasonable range of alternatives to be evaluated as required by the state and federal environmental

process.

- Alternative 1: Metro ROW and overcrossing, without a station at Manhattan/Inglewood
 - Reasoning: This alternative makes efficient and effective use of the existing Metro ROW and straightforwardly extends the existing aerial structure across Manhattan Beach Boulevard, which is a necessary grade separation, before returning to grade. It provides the fastest travel time. The rough order of magnitude cost estimate is within the Measure M funding allocation.
- Alternative 3: Hawthorne to 190th Street, without a station at Hawthorne/166th
 - Reasoning: This alternative serves more commercial land uses and may have the highest potential for new transit-oriented communities land use planning, should local cities choose to update their plans. It is superior to Alternative 4 because it does not have sharp turns to degrade performance. This alternative was prepared in response to public and stakeholder input. Its rough order of magnitude cost exceeds the Measure M funding allocation.

How these alternatives connect with the planned Redondo Beach Transit Center and the proposed South Bay Galleria Improvement Project (a private project within the City of Redondo Beach) will be further studied during the environmental review process.

Alternative 2: ROW with Overcrossing and Alternative 4: Hawthorne to Artesia will not be carried forward for further consideration as these alternatives do not perform as well in advancing the goals of the Project and have limited community support, as further discussed below.

Cost Estimates

All project cost estimates are rough order of magnitude. Significant project design development remains. Cost estimates are expected to increase resulting from further defining the project during the environmental review and public, stakeholder and partner engagement processes.

Consistency with Metro's Equity Platform Framework

The Project is consistent with the recently-adopted Metro Equity Platform Framework and will provide new benefits of enhanced mobility and regional access to minority and/or low-income populations within the Project area. The Project would run primarily through Environmental Justice (EJ) communities, which the SAA defines as populations of over 50% minority, low-income, or limited-English proficiency. These communities are burdened by existing land use and transportation issues within the Project area. Further, the South Bay as a whole is not well connected to the regional transit system. According to the 2016 Southern California Association of Governments Regional Transportation Plan/ Sustainable Communities Strategy, population and employment within the Project area are projected to grow by 8% and 21%, respectively, by 2040.

The Project will improve access to these jobs, as well as to major activity centers, including educational and medical institutions, and recreational opportunities within the Project area and across the Los Angeles region. All of the aforementioned Project benefits will collectively expand access to opportunities for residents of the Project area. Metro staff will ensure that Metro's Equity Platform Framework will guide the process for evaluating the recommended alternatives in the Draft EIS/EIR.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

This action will not have any impact on the safety of our customers and/or employees because this Project is at the study phase and no capital or operational impacts results from this Board action.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact to this action.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The recommendation supports strategic plan goal 1: provide high quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling. The Project area currently faces a number of interrelated land use and transportation issues. Major arterial roadways are congested throughout much of the day. Consequently, bus routes in the South Bay experience slow travel speeds and a high variation in travel times. There are numerous transit operators in the Project area but poor connections between local and regional systems. Additionally, there is a lack of high-quality, frequent transit services that connect to key destinations and employment centers locally and outside the Project area.

A more convenient and reliable connection between the Metro rail system and South Bay communities would reduce transit travel times and provide a viable alternative to driving. The project aims at providing a reliable, high-frequency transit service and improving mobility in southwestern Los Angeles County by enhancing the regional transit network in the South Bay.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board could decide not to approve the recommended alternatives to be carried forward into the environmental. This would not be consistent with prior Board direction to advance the Project and Measure M. This alternative is not recommended as this would impact the Project's environmental clearance schedule. The narrowing of the alternatives will ensure the Project remains on schedule and will also support the procurement of a contractor to deliver the Project. The Board could decide to instead carry forward either or both Alternatives 2 and 4. This is not recommended either because both have operational challenges and limited community support:

Alternative 2 has design challenges associated with transition from aerial station at Redondo/Marine to a trench segment before Manhattan/Inglewood Boulevards.

Alternative 4 has operational challenges due to geometry, including multiple sharp turns. Requires more ROW acquisitions from the adjacent commercial, industrial, utility, and residential properties, particularly in the segment along I-405 between Inglewood Avenue and Hawthorne Boulevard.

NEXT STEPS

Upon Board approval, staff will initiate the procurement of consultant services to prepare the environmental analysis, advanced conceptual engineering and conduct community outreach. Staff

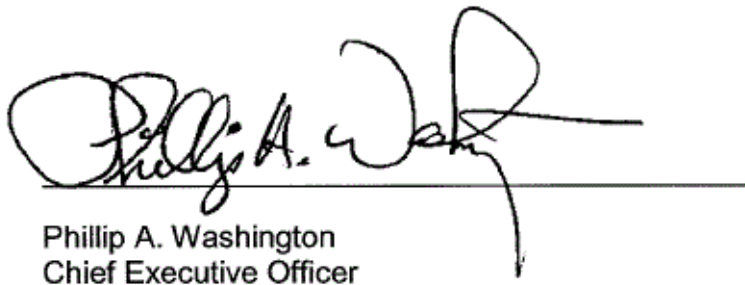
will return to the Board for approval of a contract award of this work.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A - SAA Executive Summary
- Attachment B - SAA Alternatives
- Attachment C - Summary of Project Goals Results
- Attachment D - Summary of Performance Measures
- Attachment E - Recommended Alternatives
- Attachment F - Comment Letters

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