



## Board Report

File #: 2025-0818, File Type: Project

Agenda Number: 11.

**REVISED**  
**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE**  
**JANUARY 14, 2026**

**SUBJECT: C LINE EXTENSION TO TORRANCE PROJECT FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT CERTIFICATION**

**ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

CONSIDER:

- A. APPROVING the Board selected Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), a 4.5-mile fully grade-separated light rail extension of the C Line Extension to Torrance (now K Line) with two stations in Redondo Beach and Torrance as the Project (Project);
- B. CERTIFYING, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR);
- C. ADOPTING, in accordance with CEQA, the:
  1. Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations, and
  2. Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP); and
- D. AUTHORIZING the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to file a Notice of Determination (NOD) with the Los Angeles County Clerk and the State of California Clearinghouse.

**ISSUE**

On September 11, 2025, Metro issued the Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Final EIR and released the final environmental document for public circulation. The Final EIR contains all completed studies, which respond fully to all public comments on all alignments in the Draft EIR, including the Right of Way (ROW) and Hawthorne alignments, as requested by a Metro Board motion by Director Butts on May 23, 2024 (Attachment A). The C Line Extension to Torrance (CLET) is a 2008 LA County voter approved Measure R, and 2016 LA County voter approved Measure M, project that is included in the 2020 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). Metro is the CEQA Lead Agency for the [Project <https://www.metro.net/projects/green-line-extension/>](https://www.metro.net/projects/green-line-extension/) and the Board of Directors (Board) is responsible for certifying the Final EIR, affirming that the document has been completed in compliance with CEQA, that the Final EIR was

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presented to and considered by the Metro Board prior to project approval, and that the Final EIR reflects Metro’s independent judgment and analysis.

Staff recommend that the Board certify the Draft EIR, Final EIR, Appendices, and EIR errata, which together constitute as the complete [EIR <https://us.planengage.com/clineextension/page/welcome>](https://us.planengage.com/clineextension/page/welcome), and approve the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA, adopted by the Board in May 2024) as the Project. See Attachment B, Executive Summary of Final EIR.

## **BACKGROUND**

Today, the South Bay region experiences severe congestion along the I-405 and nearby arterial roadways, and this is expected to grow in the future (2042), as population and jobs are projected to grow by seven and 19 percent, respectively. Providing a rail connection to the South Bay has been a long-term regional goal to provide a fast and reliable mobility option, strengthen economic opportunities, and reduce environmental impacts associated with automobile use.

The Project would extend light rail service farther into the South Bay along the Harbor Subdivision railroad corridor, referred to as the Metro ROW as it is owned by Metro. As proposed, the Project would travel through the Cities of Lawndale, Redondo Beach, and Torrance, expanding local and regional access by adding two new rail stations in Redondo Beach and Torrance connecting to bus transit centers operated by the respective cities.

### Project History

In 1993, Metro purchased the Harbor Subdivision rail corridor, a 26-mile freight railroad corridor that connects Downtown L.A. to San Pedro, with the intent of expanding passenger rail access across L.A. County. In 1995, Metro opened the Green Line (subsequently renamed C line) that traveled between Norwalk and Redondo Beach along segments of Interstate 105 and the Harbor Subdivision corridor (Metro ROW) until 2024 when Metro modified operations between the K and C lines. In 2009, Metro completed a planning study to extend transit service between Downtown Los Angeles to the Ports of San Pedro Bay and Long Beach, using the Metro ROW, while maintaining existing freight service operated by railroads. Metro has advanced planning studies since 2009, and an extension of the Green Line is included in the voter-approved Measure M Expenditure Plan. Staff received direction from the Metro Board in 2018 to begin environmental clearance under CEQA, culminating in the Final EIR proposed for certification presented in this Board Report.

Thus far, funding has been identified for this Project from several sources including voter-approved Measure R in 2008, Measure M in 2016, a state grant from the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) in 2018, and funds from Senate Bill (SB) 1, as well as 3% local match contributions - totaling \$1.4 billion. Current funding represents 52% of the capital cost estimate, discussed further in this report. At this stage in project development, having over 50% of the funding secured for the full alignment of the project is significant compared to recent transit corridor projects at this stage (see Table 1).

*Table 1. Funding Secured for Metro Transit Corridor Project at Final EIR Certification*

Transit Corridor Project	At Time of Certification of Final EIR/EIS Dollars in Year of Expenditure (YOE\$)					
	Month of Certification	Funding Secured	Capital Cost Estimate for Full Alignment	Capital Cost Estimate for Initial Operating Section (IOS)	% of Funding Secured for Full Alignment	% of Funding Secured for IOS
<b>Eastside Phase 2 Light Rail Transit (LRT)</b> 4.7 (IOS) to 9 miles	May 2024	\$3.4B	\$10.2B to Whittier (2022)	\$7.9B to Montebello (2022)	33%	43%
<b>Southeast Gateway Line LRT</b> (West Santa Ana Branch) 14.5 (IOS) to 19.3 miles	April 2024	\$3.13B	\$15.5B DTLA to Pioneer (2020)	\$7.2B Slauson to Pioneer (2023)	20%	43%
<b>East San Fernando Valley LRT</b> 6.7 (IOS) to 9.2 miles	December 2020	\$1.6B	\$1.9-2.2B to Sylmar (2018)	\$1.7-\$1.9B to Pacoima (2018)	73%-84%	84%-94%
<b>Crenshaw/LAX LRT</b> (K Line) 8.5 miles	September 2011	\$1.47B	\$1.715B to LAX (2010)	Undetermined at time of certification	86%	N/A
<b>Westside Subway Extension</b> (D Line Ext) Heavy Rail Transit 9 miles	April / May 2012	\$4.2B	\$6.29B to Westwood/VA (2011)	Section 1: \$2.6B Section 2: \$1.6B Section 3: \$2.1B (2011)	67%	100% for Sections 1&2, 0% for Section 3

*Dollars are estimated in year of expenditure. Parentheses indicate base year of dollars for cost estimates.*

**Environmental Review Process**

On January 29, 2021, Metro published a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to solicit public comments on the scope, content, and information that should be considered as a part of the EIR. Two years later, on January 26, 2023, Metro released a Draft EIR for public review over a 61-day review period that concluded on March 27, 2023. Metro collected over 2,000 public comments during the comment period, which included five public hearings (four in-person and one virtual). The Draft EIR evaluates three light rail alignments and three “Alternatives to the Proposed Project” as required by CEQA, that would lessen or avoid significant Project-related impacts. The alignments and alternatives included:

- Metro ROW Elevated/At-Grade Alignment,
- Trench Option,
- Hawthorne Blvd Option,
- 170<sup>th</sup> & 182<sup>nd</sup> Street Grade Separated Light Rail Alternative (Hybrid Alternative),
- High Frequency Bus Alternative, and
- No Project Alternative.

In addition to the Draft EIR, Metro published several other reports on ridership, user benefits, cost, schedule, real estate needs, changes to traffic and parking, and other technical issues on the Project [website <https://www.metro.net/clineext>](https://www.metro.net/clineext).

**Summary of Community Engagement During EIR**

Metro led extensive community engagement both in person and virtually during the environmental review process, sharing information with the community on the Project through videos, interactive websites, public meetings, events and briefings. We also listened to and learned about local

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concerns through neighborhood walks, transit rider intercepts and door-to-door to businesses outreach. These activities allowed Metro to respond to questions and document feedback for transparency. Metro also worked with a market research firm to conduct a public opinion poll of residents of Lawndale, Redondo Beach and Torrance in Spring 2023. The poll found that a majority of residents were familiar with the project (60%) and support the project (67%). Across the three cities, only 8% oppose the project. Support for the project was fairly consistent across demographic groups with the highest levels of support (76% support) from young adults (ages 18-34) and from households with incomes of less than 49,000 (75% support).

Metro has kept the community informed throughout the environmental review process through multiple channels and thousands of notifications so that residents and stakeholders are updated on opportunities to review and participate at Project milestones. Between 2021 and 2025, Metro collected over 4,700 comments from community members. More than 2,100 participants joined Project events and the Project website received more than 20,000 views (see Appendix A of the [Final EIR <https://us.planengage.com/clineextension/page/welcome>](https://us.planengage.com/clineextension/page/welcome)).

### Board Selection of LPA

In May 2024, based on the Draft EIR, technical analyses, public comments, and staff recommendation, the Metro Board selected the 170th/182<sup>nd</sup> Grade-Separated Light Rail Transit Alternative (also referred to as the “Hybrid Alternative”) as the LPA. The Hybrid Alternative was selected because it met Project objectives while responding to community concerns and minimizing construction disruptions and long-term impacts to the community. Specifically, the Hybrid Alternative:

- Is expected to deliver significant mobility benefits to 1.49 million new riders a year, with 3.6 million annual boardings - reflecting improved regional connectivity between the high job-growth South Bay and the greater Metro rail network, which in turn expands access to jobs, housing, schools, and daily needs.
- Provides two new rail stations with direct connections to existing regional bus transit centers constructed and operated by the cities of Redondo Beach and Torrance, thus strengthening connectivity between local and regional transportation networks.
- Minimizes property acquisitions by building within the Metro-owned ROW and leveraging this historical investment.
- Improves safety conditions in the ROW where space allows by providing new neighborhood paths where sidewalks are lacking today, upgrading existing freight crossings and reducing existing freight noise with a proposed quiet zone corridor.
- Improves pedestrian and cyclist safety along school routes and improves traffic safety and reduces delay in the surrounding areas by fully grade separating the light rail with elevated segments and two under-crossings.

In approving the staff-recommended LPA, the Board also passed a motion introduced by Director Butts directing that staff:

- Complete technical and environmental studies to respond fully to the public’s comments and questions that were received on the ROW and Hawthorne Boulevard alignments; and
- Refine cost estimates and develop a funding plan that identifies all possible federal, state, and local funding sources to implement the Project.

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The Hybrid Option is included in the Final EIR as the LPA and is described in detail, along with CEQA analyses conducted on it and the other alignments.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **CEQA**

Metro is the Lead Agency under CEQA for the C Line Extension to Torrance Project. CEQA requires that Metro balance, as applicable, the economic, social, technological, and other benefits of the Project against its unavoidable impacts when considering environmental certification and project approval. CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a) states that no public agency shall approve or carry out a project which identifies one or more significant environmental effects unless the public agency makes written findings for each of the identified significant effects, accompanied by a brief explanation of the rationale for each finding. If the Metro Board certifies the EIR and approves the Project, thereby completing the CEQA environmental clearance, the Project will be eligible to seek the potential discretionary reviews, approvals, and real estate negotiations that would be needed to implement the Project.

Prior to approving the Project, the Board must find that notwithstanding the disclosure of these significant and unavoidable impacts, there are specific reasons for approving this Project and that these reasons serve to override and outweigh the Project's significant and unavoidable effects. CEQA requires that support be provided in writing of the specific reasons for approving a project when significant impacts cannot be avoided or substantially lessened. These findings are included in the Project's Statement of Overriding Considerations (Attachment C-1). Section 21081.6 of the California Public Resources Code requires the Lead Agency (for each project that is subject to CEQA) to monitor performance of the mitigation measures included in the environmental document to ensure that mitigation does, in fact, take place after a project is approved. Therefore, a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) has been prepared to ensure compliance with the adopted mitigation measures. The purpose of the MMRP is to ensure that the mitigation measures identified in the Final EIR that mitigate the potentially significant environmental effects of the Project are properly carried out. Metro is responsible for assuring full compliance with the provisions of the MMRP (Attachment D).

### **Final EIR**

The Final EIR was made public on September 11, 2025 and includes analysis of all alignment options and alternatives evaluated in the Draft EIR. The document describes the Board-adopted LPA, and includes clarifications, corrections, and revisions to the Draft EIR based on design refinements and/or additional analyses. It also provides written responses to more than 2,000 public comments received during the Draft EIR review period, consistent with CEQA requirements. The document includes 21 Major Topic responses to provide comprehensive responses to the most commonly asked questions and frequently raised concerns.

Since the Draft EIR, the Final EIR was supplemented by additional technical work including specialized studies and updated engineering plans to respond to community concerns. These additional studies included:

- Field studies including a property boundary survey, drone photography and aerial survey of the Metro-owned ROW to confirm ownership and ROW widths, as the width of the Metro ROW

was raised by homeowners adjacent to the corridor.

- Refined advanced conceptual engineering (ACE) plans for the LPA, reflecting survey work (Appendix B of the Final EIR).
- Additional real estate research on properties that would be affected by the LPA in the 2025 Real Estate Acquisitions Report.
- Updates to power needs and adjustments to freight realignment south of 190<sup>th</sup> Street based on discussions with BNSF and adjacent property owners.
- Traffic counts of arterials to inform freight crossing design.
- Refined cost estimates for alignments.
- Updated Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to help the community better understand the environmental review processes, design and engineering considerations, and safety, among other topics.
- Summary of key issues and responses to questions about the Hawthorne Option (Attachment E).

These reports were published on September 11, 2025, and are available on the Project website and the Plan Engage web [platform <https://us.planengage.com/clineextension>](https://us.planengage.com/clineextension). Communications with the public and engagement activities with stakeholders were conducted throughout the development of the Final EIR, and are described in Attachment F.

#### Circulation of the Final EIR

The Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Final EIR was filed with the Los Angeles County Clerk and California State Clearinghouse. Metro notified cities, agencies, property owners, residents and the greater community through various means and media including print and social media, newspaper advertisements, and direct mailings. The Final EIR can be accessed at [www.metro.net/clineext](http://www.metro.net/clineext) <<http://www.metro.net/clineext>> and at the following public libraries:

- Lawndale Library (14615 Burin Ave, Lawndale, CA 90260)
- Redondo Beach North Library (2000 Artesia Blvd, Redondo Beach, CA 90278)
- North Torrance Library (3604 Artesia Bl, Torrance, CA 90504)
- Katy Geissert Civic Center Library (3301 Torrance Blvd, Torrance, CA 90503)
- Metro Headquarters Library (One Gateway Plaza, Los Angeles, CA 90012) by appointment only.

To further Project awareness, Metro partnered with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) that represent the South Bay area and broader region to leverage their expertise in connecting with communities in and around the Project study area. A full description of public engagement and noticing throughout the environmental process can be found in Appendix A to the Final EIR with recent efforts briefly summarized in Attachment F.

#### Overall Project Benefits

By extending light rail south to Torrance, the Project would integrate two new bus transit centers into the existing regional rail and bus network and provide seamless connections to the C Line, LAX, E Line, as well as broader access to the regional system. These connections would significantly improve transit mobility for South Bay residents and strengthen the regional multimodal transportation network. The Project would divert vehicle trips from congested freeways and arterial

streets, which translates into reductions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases. Specifically, environmental analyses show that the Project reduces approximately 43,000 vehicle miles traveled per day, resulting in net greenhouse gas emissions reductions of roughly 1,850 metric tons per year. These benefits are consistent with, and help advance, regional and statewide policy commitments to address climate change and improve air quality, including implementation of SB 375, California's Scoping Plan under AB 32 and SB 32, and SCAG's RTP/SCS.

Additionally, the Project would generate substantial economic benefits for the region, through both short-term construction employment and long-term regional economic growth due to improved access to jobs. During construction, the Project is expected to create 15,000 jobs in the Los Angeles region, including skilled trade and apprenticeship opportunities that support local workforce development and disadvantaged communities. Consistent with Metro's commitment to small business participation and disadvantaged business enterprises, the Project would also create contracting opportunities for local firms.

The Metro Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA), discussed in this report, shows how improved transportation access expands employment opportunities for workers. In turn, employers benefit from a larger labor pool and thus greater productivity. Over a 20-year period, the Project is estimated to generate \$16.3 billion in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the region. Additionally, this infrastructure investment would help to catalyze local development of station areas, thereby supporting new housing, commercial space, and transit-oriented development, stimulating economic activity and expanding the local tax base.

### Cost Estimates

Per Board direction in May 2024, Metro has refined the cost estimates, in keeping guidance per the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The refined cost estimates address:

- Updates to baseline construction costs for minor design refinements discussed in the Final EIR.
- Actual inflation rates between 2022 and 2025 to account for the greater than anticipated cost increases for construction materials, labor and professional services.
- An updated preliminary construction schedule to address additional time to complete the EIR process (see Figure 1).
- Updated escalation (3.5% average annual) for mid-point of construction.
- Updated contingency to reflect higher base construction costs (~40% based on early stage of design at 15% advanced conceptual engineering).

*Figure 1. Updated Preliminary Construction Schedules*



With the updated schedule, the LPA is anticipated to open in March 2036. The Hawthorne Option is estimated to open in December 2036, assuming two years to complete additional environmental approval under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in coordination with Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This process would likely take more than two years to complete due to additional reviews and agreements required to be in place as experienced on other projects where Metro and Caltrans are collaborating. As such, Metro has prepared a more conservative schedule for the Hawthorne Option with up to four years to complete NEPA and Caltrans approvals, which would open by the end of 2038 to better reflect risks to the project schedule with this additional round of approvals, as shown in Figure 1.

Table 2 summarizes the refined cost estimates and differences between the Draft EIR estimates in 2022 and Final EIR cost refinements in 2025.

Table 2. Refined Construction Cost Estimates (2025)

Table 1. Refined Construction Cost Estimates (2025)

Construction Cost Estimates \$ in millions	LPA Hybrid Alt	Hawthorne Option
2022 Baseline Costs	\$1,213	\$1,497
Design Refinements in Final EIR	\$119	\$107
<b>Subtotal of Updated Baseline Costs</b>	<b>\$1,332</b>	<b>\$1,604</b>
Percent Increase in Baseline Construction Costs (between 2022 to 2025)	9.8%	7.1%
Actual Inflation of Baseline Costs (2022-2025)	\$240	\$289
Escalation (3.5% average annual)	\$523	\$814
Contingency (~40% of baseline costs)	\$608	\$733
<b>2025 Total Estimate (Final EIR)</b>	<b>\$2,703</b>	<b>\$3,440</b>

The updated cost estimate for the LPA is \$2.7 billion in 2025\$. Between 2022 to 2025, the LPA construction cost estimate increased by \$468 million (9.8%). Of that, approximately \$119 million is attributed to baseline construction costs based on minor design refinements, which are primarily in

the area south of 190<sup>th</sup> Street and would also apply to the Hawthorne Option. The remaining increase in cost is due to recent inflation (2022 to 2025), future escalation for project delivery, and contingency to address known and unknown risks based on an early stage of design.

The Hawthorne Option has increased by \$478 million since 2022. The updated cost estimate is now \$3.44 billion in 2025\$. This cost estimate assumes a two-year process to complete NEPA and related Caltrans and FHWA approvals. However, Metro estimates that the environmental review and approval process would take longer, adding additional cost to the Hawthorne Option, further discussed in the comparison of options section below.

**Project Funding**

As shown in Table 3, approximately 52% of the funding necessary to build the Project has been secured to date for the LPA, including Measure R and M funds as well as state grants - constituting \$1.4 billion toward the estimated LPA cost of \$2.7 billion. The secured funding is sufficient for covering estimated Project costs for early works activities, including final design, right of way, and freight and utility relocation, discussed further below.

*Table 3. Funding Sources for LPA*  
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Funding Sources	LPA (Hybrid Alternative)
Secured Funding	\$1,414.8
Measure R	\$272.0
Measure M*	\$821.4
3% Local Match Requirement**	\$81.1
TIRCP Grant	\$231.3
SB1 – Local Partnership Program	\$9.0
Not Secured	\$1,288.2
Other Local Funding	\$1,038.2
Other State Funding	\$250.0
Other Federal Funding	\$0.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,703.0</b>

\*includes inflation adjustment as allowed under the Measure M Ordinance.  
 \*\*The current cost estimate is based on 15% design completed for the EIR.

Should the Final EIR be certified by the Board, Metro would advance design work on the approved Project and continue to use existing local funding while seeking additional funding. Such additional funding would be sought from existing transit-eligible state grant programs (e.g., State Transportation Improvement Program, Local Partnership Program, Solutions for Congested Corridors) and use local funds, including local sales tax. Local sources that will be considered or proposed include a possible transfer of Measure M Highway funds to the Project, and surplus Express Lanes revenue.

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Although this Project is not a candidate for federal funding (see Table 3), the proposed funding strategy is consistent with practices advanced for previous projects as previously shown in Table 1. Metro has successfully competed for additional funding after environmental approval for many transit corridor projects. Should the Metro Board approve this Project, Metro would follow its past practice and leverage the existing funding through a sequenced construction approach (discussed in Attachment G) and pursue additional funds to close the gap.

### Project Name & Operational Plan

The Project was originally envisioned as an extension of the C (Green) Line (which operated until 2025 from Norwalk Station to Redondo Beach Station) and referred to as the C Line (Green) Extension to Torrance Project in the Draft EIR. Following the completion of the Draft EIR public comment period, and after the Metro Board selected the LPA, in June 2025, Metro implemented operational changes redirecting the C Line to serve to serve the new LAX Metro Transit Center (MTC), providing a connection to the Los Angeles International Airport. In addition, the recent operational K Line would operate service from the E Line, now continuing south to the Redondo Beach (Marine) Station. As such, the CLET Project would operate as a southern extension of the K Line with direct access to LAX, Inglewood, and Central Los Angeles and rail connections to the Metro C and E Lines. Furthermore, a separate study is underway to potentially extend the K Line further north in the future from its current terminus at Crenshaw/Expo to the Metro D and B Lines, thereby creating a north-south rail line from Torrance to Hollywood, connecting dozens of communities and activity centers in between. For consistency, the Final EIR refers to the Project as the C Line Extension to Torrance as described in the Draft EIR. If certified by the Metro Board, the Project name would be changed to the K Line Extension to Torrance.

### Comparison of Options

While the Final EIR analyzes all alternatives and discloses environmental impacts of each, the following discussion compares the alternatives based on technical studies performed to date including the Final EIR, cost estimates, ridership studies, community preferences and concerns, and deliverability and long-term operational sustainability, including the recent Cost Benefit Analysis.

### *Locally Preferred Alternative*

The LPA provides significant regional economic benefits and provides a higher benefit-to-cost ratio (BCR) than the Hawthorne Option based on its strong mobility benefits, lower construction cost, and earlier opening date. The LPA would generate approximately 11,500 daily trips and offers greater travel time savings per trip and a higher reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) than the Hawthorne Option. The proposed stations at the Redondo Beach Transit Center and Torrance Transit Center offer seamless transfers between bus and rail, and provide other mobility options for vehicle parking, bicycle parking, and passenger drop-off areas for added convenience and reduced trip travel times.

While the LPA has drawn concerns from adjacent property owners and community members, including apprehensions about safety (personal safety, derailment, hazardous materials transport, active pipelines, etc.), loss of green space, and increased noise from the proposed new light rail service, Metro has committed to addressing and mitigating these concerns in several ways. Specifically, the LPA proposes multiple new safety features for corridor communities, including improvements to the existing freight infrastructure that would result in safer and quieter operations

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than those observed today. The LPA would upgrade existing freight tracks and crossings and would install security barriers and an intrusion detection system to further protect pedestrians from the active freight corridor. Freight trains travel slowly in the corridor today (around 20 miles per hour), which has a low risk of derailment. The Project proposes no modifications to BNSF's current operations, nor changes to existing regulations or practices in the transport of hazardous materials. The LPA would mitigate operational noise and vibration to less than significant for both light rail and freight through grade separations, sound walls, and the quiet zone ready corridor improvements.

Along the corridor, the width of the Metro ROW varies, as does the distance between the light rail tracks and adjacent residential property lines. In Lawndale, for example, the distance from the nearest light rail track centerline to the adjoining property line ranges from approximately 27 feet where the Metro ROW is 100 feet wide (north of 170th Street) to approximately 13 feet where the ROW narrows to 75 feet (south of 170th Street). These conditions are comparable to other Metro light rail projects constructed within historic railroad corridors traversing residential neighborhoods, including the Metro A Line in South Pasadena and Azusa and the Metro E Line in West Los Angeles, where track centerlines are, in some locations, as close as seven feet from adjacent residential properties. Metro safely constructed and operates light rail service in these neighborhoods, many of which have sound walls similar to those proposed as part of the Project to minimize noise.

As noted by Lawndale and Redondo Beach residents, green space is limited in the Project area. To address this concern, the LPA would construct two new neighborhood walking paths (one in Lawndale and one in Redondo Beach) to provide safe, dedicated pedestrian routes in areas that currently lack sidewalks. Metro would work to protect existing trees, where possible, and plant replacement trees at a ratio of 2:1 to enhance shade and greenery in the neighborhoods. The LPA is designed to use Metro-owned land for construction and operations to minimize commercial acquisitions and avoid residential displacements. By using the Metro ROW and grade separating the light rail, the Project avoids changes to streets and parking. These improvements would enhance the safety of school children and other pedestrians, reduce conflicts between freight operations, and improve the quality of the public realm in adjacent communities. Lastly, the LPA does not require additional environmental approvals under NEPA and does not require an encroachment permit from Caltrans, which reduces overall risk to schedule and costs, unlike the Hawthorne Option.

### *Hawthorne Option*

The Hawthorne Option is estimated to achieve higher ridership than the LPA (approximately 1.7 million vs 1.49 million annual riders, respectively), but would not connect to the Redondo Beach Transit Center, thereby missing an opportunity to leverage an existing facility that would promote transferability between rail and bus. Instead, this alignment includes a station in the middle of Hawthorne Blvd, near the South Bay Galleria. While the adjacent mall and planned development is expected to be a trip generator, the station location would require greater walking distances and fewer amenities for transfers, resulting in a lower travel savings per trip for the Hawthorne Option (19.7 minutes) compared to the LPA (22 minutes). It also requires all riders to cross a major arterial that carries approximately 70,000 vehicles a day to access the rail station.

The Hawthorne Option construction cost estimate (\$3.44B) is \$737 million more than that of the LPA (\$2.7B) and is expected to have a longer timeline due to additional environmental approvals, permitting requirements, extensive utility relocations, and property acquisitions. The Hawthorne

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Option would require permits and environmental review by both Caltrans and the FHWA due to its encroachment into Interstate 405 (I-405) where the alignment crosses freeway ramps and locates columns and support structures adjacent to the I-405 sound walls within Caltrans right of way. The Hawthorne Option also requires Caltrans review and approval for the segment that runs in the center of Hawthorne Blvd (State Road 107), which is under Caltrans jurisdiction with the exception of the segment in Lawndale, which was relinquished.

Due to its encroachment into the interstate highway system, additional environmental clearance through NEPA would add a minimum of two years to the timeline, and likely longer (up to four years), which would further increase costs and delay service. For example, a two-year delay would increase costs by \$16.9 million per month for the Hawthorne Option, based on current inflation estimates for construction. In a 2023 comment letter to Metro on the Draft EIR, Caltrans emphasized the “extensive collaboration with Caltrans staff for various permits and design approvals” needed for the Hawthorne Option. Long-term, the Hawthorne Option would require a joint-use agreement with Caltrans and FHWA for maintenance activities within the I-405 segment.

The approximately 3-mile segment is elevated in order to cross over several major streets and highway on- and off-ramps and ensure safety for pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, and trains. Metro performed an assessment of traffic safety and operations at intersections along the alignments per the Metro Grade Crossing Safety Policy for Light Rail Transit and determined that this segment of the Hawthorne Option needed to be grade separated. Construction of the Hawthorne Option would require temporary closures to the I-405 on- and off-ramps, as well as travel lanes along Hawthorne Blvd, which would reduce roadway capacity during the estimated five to seven years of construction. The Hawthorne Option would also require relocation of major utilities, including an underground storm drain located in the roadway median, and raising overhead high-voltage transmission lines to provide sufficient clearance from the overhead catenary system for the elevated light rail. The cost and construction complexity of these utility relocations would be difficult to mitigate fully, given that construction must occur within public streets requiring lane closures. Metro would work with local jurisdictions on traffic management plans during construction to minimize effects on the roadway and adjacent homes and businesses, where feasible.

In terms of permanent impacts, several commercial parcels would be affected permanently, including auto dealerships, gas stations, retail stores, and self-storage businesses, due to anticipated commercial property acquisitions, as well as anticipated traffic and parking constraints along Hawthorne Boulevard. By contrast, the LPA achieves significant mobility benefits while avoiding these heightened adverse effects that are difficult to address due to street width and utility constraints along Hawthorne Boulevard with little space for additional sidewalk width improvements. The Hawthorne Option would forego community improvements in the Metro ROW, such as quiet-zone-ready corridor improvements to eliminate existing freight horn noise, safety improvements from upgraded freight crossing infrastructure and trackwork, and new neighborhood paths where sidewalks are lacking today.

### Metro Cost Benefit Analysis

In July 2025, the Board adopted a CBA methodology framework for evaluating project alternatives, including assessing the regional economic impacts of investment and identifying benefits relative to the costs of investment. The CBA includes two components: Weighted Benefits Analysis and Benefit-

Cost Ratio, discussed in Attachment H.

### **DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT**

Certification of the Final EIR and project approval will not impact the safety of Metro's customers or employees.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The Board's certification of the Final EIR would represent Metro's commitment to the eventual buildout of this Project. Metro has secured more than 50% of the estimated funding needed for the current 2025 cost estimate and would need to secure future state funding and allocate additional local funds to the Project. While the construction schedule and delivery methods would be determined based on funding and additional technical design and investigations, project approval under CEQA would allow staff to continue advancing the design, conduct site investigations, seek discretionary grants on a more competitive basis, and continue third party coordination and communications with stakeholders and communities.

#### **Impact to Budget**

Funding for this action comes from Measure R 35% Transit Capital. The Fiscal Year 2026 budget includes approximately \$11 million in Cost Center 4350 (Mobility Corridors), Project 460304 "Green Line Extension Redondo Beach/South Bay" for professional services and support and \$35.2 million in Cost Center 8510 (Program Management), Project 860304 "K Line Extension Torrance." Since this is a multi-year contract, the cost center Managers and Chiefs will be responsible for budgeting in future years.

### **EQUITY PLATFORM**

The Project will connect the South Bay with the rest of the Metro Rail network, increasing access to employment, education, housing, and regional centers, serving many Equity Focus Communities (EFCs) along the C and K Lines, including those in communities such as Hawthorne, Gardena, West Carson, and Inglewood where close to 50% of the population is low-income. The 2022 Metro Customer Satisfaction Survey shows that 73% of existing C Line and over 75% of K Line riders come from very low-income households and over 74% do not have access to an automobile for trips. Four out of five C Line riders identify as black, indigenous, and/or people of color. Given the South Bay is home to many jobs and schools, expanding access to historically underserved communities helps expand economic mobility.

Based on Metro's 2022 Equity Focus Community data, only a small portion of Lawndale is considered an EFC. To better understand the communities within walking distance to proposed stations, Metro analyzed household income, car ownership, and demographics and found that 20% to 39.9% are low-income, 6% to 9% do not have access to vehicles, and 50% to 79% of the population is non-white for census tracts within a half-mile of the Redondo Beach Transit Center Station. The Torrance Transit Center would serve census tracts where 10% to 19% of households are low-income, 20% to 49% are non-white, and 6% to 9% do not have access to a vehicle. Both proposed rail stations for the LPA would directly connect to local bus transit centers in Redondo

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Beach and Torrance, providing easy bus-to-rail transfers and providing a convenient and reliable transit option for communities with higher mobility needs. Travel time savings, and proximity to jobs, schools, homes and activity centers were studied as part of the CBA, along with equity-related factors such as proximity of proposed stations to communities with higher socioeconomic and health burdens.

During the environmental review process, Metro circulated materials and notices in English and Spanish, the predominant languages in the area, and held pop-up events at community events to increase awareness of the Project and engage groups who do not typically participate in community meetings. As part of the release of the Final EIR, Metro partnered with seven CBOs to raise awareness and share information with community members prior to the Metro Board taking an action on the Project.

### **VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED OUTCOME**

VMT and VMT per capita in Los Angeles County are lower than national averages, the lowest in the SCAG region, and on the lower end of VMT per capita statewide, with these declining VMT trends due in part to Metro's significant investment in rail and bus transit.\* Metro's Board-adopted VMT reduction targets align with California's statewide climate goals, including achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. To ensure continued progress, all Board items are assessed for their potential impact on VMT.

As part of these ongoing efforts, this item is expected to contribute to further reductions in VMT.

This Project supports Metro's systemwide strategy to reduce VMT through planning activities that will improve and further encourage transit ridership, ridesharing, and active transportation. Metro's Board-adopted VMT reduction targets were designed to build on the success of existing investments, and this item aligns with those objectives.

Metro conducted a preliminary analysis to show that the net effect of this Project is to decrease VMT. The Draft EIR identifies that the Project would help reduce auto use by approximately 43,094 VMT per day. This would help the region meet climate change goals by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and regional energy use.

\*Based on population estimates from the United States Census and VMT estimates from Caltrans' Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) data between 2001-2019.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

The Project supports the following strategic plan goals identified in Vision 2028:

Goal 1: Provide high-quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling, Goal 3: Enhance communities and lives through mobility and access to opportunity, and Goal 5: Provide responsive, accountable, and trustworthy governance within the Metro organization.

### **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

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The Board could defer or not approve the Project, not certify the Final EIR, and/or not adopt the Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations or the MMRP. These actions are not recommended. Deferring action and delaying the Project would increase overall project costs and extend the project schedule. Each year of delay is estimated to increase overall costs by over \$152 million based on escalation. Deferral also would jeopardize the TIRCP grant of \$232 million, which requires Metro to demonstrate a good faith effort to advance the Project to maintain funding.

Failure to approve the Project would be inconsistent with the approved Metro 2020 Long Range Transportation Plan, SCAG's 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, and the 2024-2050 RTP/SCS, to meet regional and local commitments for mobility, equity, air quality, and climate. Metro would fail to meet our commitment to residents of LA County who voted to support the Project and direct sales tax dollars to mobility improvements through voter-approved Measure R and M. Metro would lose the \$232 million TIRCP grant. The South Bay would be further isolated from the greater region without a strong mobility connection to the growing rail system and would forgo over \$16.3 billion of regional economic benefits generated by the Project.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Upon Board approval, Metro will file a notice of determination (NOD) for the Project with the Los Angeles County Clerk's Office and the California State Clearinghouse within five working days of the Metro Board's action.

Staff will develop a communications plan for the next steps to guide public meetings, stakeholder coordination, field work, and real estate negotiations. Staff will continue to engage the communities and key stakeholders as the Project develops and return to the Metro Board to consider a contract modification for preliminary engineering and a contract to support staff with engineering and pre-construction activities. Near-term efforts will include coordination with local cities and agencies to assist with First/Last Mile (FLM) Planning, development of cooperative agreements with cities, agencies, and other third parties, advancing design, conducting ground investigations, performing value engineering, updating cost estimates, beginning real estate coordination with affected owners, preparing the construction delivery method, and pursuing additional funding. For future stages of work, the Project would be referred to as the K Line Southern Extension to Torrance.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - Board Motion 30.1, May 23, 2024

Attachment B - Final EIR Executive Summary

Attachment C -1 - Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations - ROW

Attachment C - 2 - Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations -Hawthorne Option

Attachment D - MMRP

Attachment E - Hawthorne Option Key Issues & Responses

Attachment F - Summary of Recent Engagement Since LPA

Attachment G - Summary of Preliminary Delivery Approach

Attachment H - Cost Benefit Analysis

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