



Board Report

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Agenda Number: 7.

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
MARCH 15, 2023

Motion by:

DIRECTORS HAHN, DUTRA, SOLIS, AND BARGER

A New Start for the West Santa Ana Branch Motion

The West Santa Ana Branch is set to advance into construction in the next few years, with a Record of Decision anticipated in 2024 for the LPA segment from Slauson/A Line to Artesia. Once fully completed, this 19-mile light-rail line will provide a one-seat ride, connecting a dozen cities in some of the County’s most transit dependent communities, from the City of Artesia to Union Station, Downtown Los Angeles.

The West Santa Ana Branch will primarily serve residents who live within some of the most polluted, and socioeconomically disadvantaged communities in the State. Nearly the entire alignment will be located in Metro-defined Equity-Focused Communities and the CalEnviroScreen’s SB 535-defined “Disadvantaged Communities.” With formal recognition at the local and state level, along with the Eastside Extension initial operating segment, this project stands to be a prime candidate for federal funding given the President’s Justice40 Initiative, which ensures that at least 40% of all discretionary grants go toward projects in disadvantaged communities.

This project, when completed, will change the way that Southeast Los Angeles residents travel across the region providing them with cleaner and faster modes of travel. The West Santa Ana Branch will be incredibly important for nearly a million residents, yet the reality of this project is still largely unknown to many. Furthermore, the name “West Santa Ana Branch” is an outdated and inaccurate description of the project itself. The lack of representation of local context within the name could be inadvertently limiting awareness and visibility of this project, both with our local stakeholders as well as State and federal partners.

With a year to go before the final Record of Decision on this project’s environmental document, now is the perfect opportunity to re-engage corridor cities, stakeholders, and community-based organizations, to find a name that is truly representative of the cultural and demographic community that it will serve, helping build a coalition in support of what will be one of the nation’s most significant efforts to address and redress historic inequities.

SUBJECT: A NEW START FOR THE WEST SANTA ANA BRANCH MOTION

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE Motion by Directors Hahn, Dutra, Solis, and Barger that the Board direct the Chief Executive Officer to work collaboratively with the West Santa Ana Branch Corridor City manager Technical Advisory Committee, Gateway Cities Council of Governments, Eco Rapid Transit Joint Powers Authority, local elected officials, community-based organizations, schools and colleges, and residents along the corridor in order to rebrand the West Santa Ana Branch, including (a) renaming the project no later than January 2024 that represent the community character and local context, (b) developing a robust communication strategy to get input for and from CBOs, corridor cities residents and businesses, and key stakeholders, and (c) report back on progress toward these directives on a quarterly basis, beginning in June 2023.