



## GENERAL BACKGROUND

### **What is the Regional Connector Transit Corridor Study? How did it come about?**

Metro will analyze options for connecting the Metro Gold, Blue, and Expo Lines through downtown Los Angeles from 7th Street/Metro Center to Alameda Street between 1<sup>st</sup> and Commercial Streets. By more directly linking these existing rail lines, Metro aims to increase mobility, accessibility and ridership throughout the region.

The Regional Connector Transit Corridor project was originally part of the planning of the Metro Gold Line but was deferred due to funding considerations. The Regional Connector was subsequently recommended for further study in both Metro's 1992 Long Range Transportation Plan and 2003 Short Range Transportation Plan. A 2004 feasibility study found that connecting these key light rail transit lines would significantly increase utilization of all rail lines and improve mobility throughout the region.

### **What area is Metro studying as part of the Regional Connector?**

The study corridor extends from the Metro Blue Line terminus at 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Wilshire Boulevard to the vicinity of the Metro Gold Line Eastside station at 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda streets in downtown Los Angeles. The study area encompasses approximately two square miles and includes the communities of Little Tokyo, the Arts District, Historic Core, Toy District, Bunker Hill, Financial District, Jewelry District, and Civic Center.

### **What transit modes are being considered?**

The transit modes under consideration for the Alternatives Analysis include existing modes in operation by Metro, including light rail (Blue/Green/Gold Lines), and different bus modes (Bus Rapid Transit or "BRT," Metro Rapid Bus, etc.).

## ROUTES/ALIGNMENTS

### **What does Metro consider to be alternatives?**

Alternatives will be developed by:

- Mode of transit – Potential modes include light rail, or bus rapid transit,,
- Alignment – The route to be taken to connect the Metro Gold Line Little Tokyo Station to the 7th Street/Metro Center station.
- Configuration – Whether the segments of the route will be at street level, aerial or underground
- Station location – Where stations would be located.



### **What factors will Metro use to select a project?**

Factors or criteria used to evaluate alternatives will be consistent with the Federal New Starts Funding guidelines, Metro guidelines, and the input received from the public during the early scoping period. Typical evaluation criteria include improvements to air quality and the environment, increases in transit ridership, improvements to travel time, project cost, and ability to generate economic activity.

### **Where will new stations be located?**

Public input will help Metro determine potential station locations. Locations are usually determined by factors such as the ability of the station to serve a greater number of riders, whether a station supports the community's vision, and how the station might contribute to local economic vitality.

### **Will the Regional Connector consider all the new residential development downtown when evaluating station locations?**

The Regional Connector's performance is based on 2030 forecasts for regional growth. This takes into consideration not only the communities now developing around the extensive rail and bus system throughout the region, but also the ongoing revitalization of downtown Los Angeles.

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH TRANSIT**

### **How will the Regional Connector coordinate with DASH and other frequently used bus corridors like Broadway and Spring Streets?**

The Regional Connector will be part of an integrated transportation system that includes pedestrian and bike amenities, regional rail, and various bus systems. As part of the AA, the ability of an alternative to best integrate and optimize transit usage, including services on local streets, will be determined.

### **Will this project consider closing any major arterial streets to automobile traffic?**

Should an alternative require elimination of parking or a traffic lane, the associated impacts will be discussed with the community and other stakeholders, and ways to mitigate those impacts will be developed in collaboration with the public. The alternatives will be evaluated based on criteria established from input received from the public during early scoping, criteria from the Federal New Starts Funding guidelines, and Metro guidelines.



## SAFETY

### **If a subway mode is selected, how can I be sure that tunnels will be safe during an earthquake?**

Similar to existing Red and Purple Line tunnels, engineers use the most recent seismological data along with subsurface ground conditions to design reinforcing for the tunnels and station structures. During the Northridge Earthquake, tunnels performed exactly as predicted. No damage to Metro structures was observed.

### **How will pedestrian safety be addressed if at-grade crossings are anticipated?**

Any safety program would include education, engineering, and enforcement. Metro has implemented a Rail Safety Education Program to address auto and pedestrian safety. This program offers rail safety orientation and training, particularly to schools and other community groups within a 1.5-mile radius of a Metro fixed-route transit system.

During the project development process, various agencies that have jurisdiction over safety and security will review all designs. At-grade crossing designs must be approved for safety by the California Public Utilities Commission.

## IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

### **What would the impacts be for street traffic, noise, and visual appearance if the project were underground? At street level? Above ground?**

General impacts and methods to mitigate them are determined during the Alternatives Analysis Study. Studies will determine the general impacts for traffic, noise, visual, historic resources and other issue areas that are normally discussed in a NEPA/ CEQA document.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS

### **What is an Alternatives Analysis? How does this fit into the overall environmental process?**

An Alternatives Analysis is a preliminary study of a wide range of alternatives. The primary objective of this analysis is to narrow the number of alternatives that could be carried forward for further study. The Alternatives Analysis for this project will evaluate several rail and bus mode options, as well as alternative alignments and segment lengths. Based on the Alternatives Analysis, the Metro Board will be asked to select a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) identifying the alignment, mode, and station locations. The Metro Board may then direct that the selected LPA be further evaluated in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and be subject to Preliminary Engineering.



## PROJECT SCHEDULE

### **What is the schedule for the study?**

Metro's Board of Directors has authorized the completion of an Alternatives Analysis. Early scoping will be completed in November 2007. An initial screening or reduction of alternatives to be analyzed will be completed in February 2008 and the Alternatives Analysis report is anticipated to be completed by June 2008.

### **Is this study the final step in determining what will get built and when?**

No. This is the first step in the project development and funding process. At the conclusion of the AA, Metro's Board of Directors may authorize conducting environmental studies per NEPA and CEQA on reasonable alternatives and a no-action alternative.

### **How much will the project cost? Where will the money for construction come from?**

Cost figures will be developed with each alternative for this two-mile connection. At this time, funding will be identified from Federal, State and local sources.

## PUBLIC INPUT

### **How can I be involved in the decision-making process? How can I stay informed about this study?**

You can register to receive future updates on the project and meeting notices by visiting [www.metro.net/regionalconnector](http://www.metro.net/regionalconnector) or by calling the project information line at (213) 922-7277. The website will be updated frequently with additional meeting notifications and project related information.

### **Can Metro make a presentation to my neighborhood or business organization?**

Yes. Metro and the project team is available to make presentations, upon request, to interested stakeholders. Please leave a message on the project phone line at (213) 922-7277, or visit the project website, and a Metro representative will contact you to arrange a meeting for your group or to invite you to one planned in your community.