



Metro[™]

Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2

Scoping Report
Final Report—June 2010



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

In January 2010, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) initiated the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement /Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIS/EIR) for the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This is one of five corridor studies that Metro is conducting in Los Angeles County and forms part of the Metro Long Range Transportation Plan.

In late 2009, Metro celebrated the opening of its newest transit line, the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension. This light rail project connects East Los Angeles to the Metro regional transit network and currently provides direct service to downtown Los Angeles, Chinatown, Highland Park and Pasadena. The proposed Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project would extend rail transit services to communities farther east of East Los Angeles and provide an opportunity to connect with the Eastside Extension and the rest of Metro's regional transit network.

1.2 Project Area

The Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project is located in eastern Los Angeles County and is generally bounded by Pomona Boulevard and State Route 60 (SR-60) Freeway to the north, Peck Road and Painter Avenue to the east, Olympic and Washington Boulevards to the south, and Atlantic Boulevard to the west. The project area consists of portions of eight jurisdictions, including the cities of Commerce, Montebello, Monterey Park, Pico Rivera, Rosemead, Santa Fe Springs, South El Monte, Whittier and unincorporated portions of Los Angeles County (see Appendix A for project area map).

The project area is traversed by three major freeways, SR-60, Interstate 605 (I-605) and Interstate 5 (I-5), as well as the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel washes. There are also Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway tracks that parallel the SR-60 and provide both freight and Metrolink service to the area.

1.3 Alternatives

In 2007, Metro initiated an Alternatives Analysis (AA) for the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project. The AA included an extensive public participation program to inform and educate stakeholders and interested parties in the study area while providing opportunities for the public and agencies to submit comments on the alternatives being considered and study findings. Numerous meetings and briefings were held throughout the AA Study, including Early Scoping Meetings, community workshops, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings, and project briefings to elected officials, city staff, and project stakeholders. The AA Study included three phases of alternative screening: preliminary, initial, and final.

This AA screening process resulted in 47 initial build alternatives being screened down to 17 alternatives, to five alternatives, and ultimately to four alternatives. This screening process is documented in the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Study Alternatives Analysis Report (January, 2009).

In 2009, these four alternatives were further refined and documented in the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 AA Addendum (October, 2009). Two build alternatives were recommended for environmental evaluation in addition to the standard No-Build and Transportation System Management (TSM) Alternatives. The two build alternatives recommended are the SR-60 Light Rail Transit (LRT) Alternative and Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative. Each alternative also preliminarily identified station areas and required parking, traction power substations (TPSS) and other ancillary facilities. The AA and Addendum documents are available at www.metro.net/eastsidephase2.

1.3.1 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative is a baseline alternative, for comparison in the environmental documents, maintaining existing and planned transit services through the year 2035. With this alternative, no new transportation infrastructure would be built within the project area aside from projects currently under construction, or funded for construction and operation by 2035 with the recently approved Measure R sales tax. This includes highway and transit projects in the current Metro Long Range Transportation Plan and the 2035 Southern California Association of Governments Regional Transportation Plan. The completion of the Metro Rapid Bus Program would also be included as a possible additional feeder bus network to serve the region's major activity centers.

1.3.2 Transportation System Management (TSM) Alternative

The TSM Alternative would include the provisions of the No-Build Alternative plus additional non-rail enhancements to the baseline transit network. The TSM Alternative would provide transportation system upgrades, such as intersection improvements, minor road widening, traffic engineering actions, bus route restructuring, shortened bus headways, expanded use of articulated buses, reserved bus lanes, expanded park-and-ride facilities, express and limited bus service, signalization improvements, and timed-transfer operations. Key elements of the TSM Alternative include: providing new

Pomona Freeway Express service connecting to the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension terminus; providing new Beverly Boulevard Rapid bus service; adding service to M10 Whittier Boulevard and M50 Washington Boulevard bus routes; upgrading M30 Garfield Avenue and M20 Montebello Boulevard bus lines; adding service to Metro 265 and 266 local buses; adding service to Foothill Transit 274; and providing new 577 Express service operating along Metro Route 270.

1.3.3 SR-60 Alternative – Light Rail Transit (LRT)

The SR-60 Alternative (see Appendix A for alternatives map) would extend east at-grade from the existing Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension terminus at Pomona and Atlantic Boulevards and transition to an aerial configuration along the southern boundary of the SR-60 Freeway right-of-way. The alignment remains elevated and extends 6.9 miles east to Peck Road in South El Monte with four proposed stations located at:

- SR-60/Garfield Avenue
- SR-60/The Shops at Montebello
- SR-60/Santa Anita Avenue
- SR-60/Peck Road

This alternative has the potential for future park and ride facilities as well as transit oriented development (TOD) at each of the four proposed station sites. The alignment's location would also require navigating the varying grades within the Caltrans freeway right-of-way, the OII Superfund site, existing and planned upgrades to the Southern California Edison transmission lines, the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel washes, I-605 Freeway and the Whittier Narrows Recreational Area.

1.3.4 Washington Boulevard Alternative – Light Rail Transit (LRT)

The Washington Boulevard Alternative (see appendix A for alternatives map) would extend east at-grade from the existing Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension terminus at Pomona and Atlantic Boulevards and transition to an aerial configuration along the southern boundary of the SR-60 Freeway right-of-way before turning south and continuing in an aerial configuration along Garfield Avenue. The aerial alignment would extend south on Garfield before turning east along Washington Boulevard towards Montebello and terminating just east of Lambert Road in the City of Whittier. The Washington Alternative is approximately 9.3 miles with six aerial stations proposed along the route, including:

- SR-60/Garfield Avenue
- Whittier Boulevard/Garfield Avenue
- Greenwood Avenue/Washington Boulevard
- Rosemead/Washington Boulevards
- Norwalk/Washington Boulevards
- Lambert Road/Washington Boulevard

Washington Boulevard is a major four to six lane arterial that is currently a designated truck route and provides access to large regional shopping facilities, industrial/business parks, and health and medical services. There is also potential for TOD at large surface parking areas near select station sites. The Washington Alternative would have to navigate through the existing streets along Garfield and Washington Boulevards, the Southern California Edison transmission lines, the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel washes and I-605 Freeway.

1.4 Summary of Purpose and Need

The Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 is identified in the Metro Long Range Transportation Plan and has been selected as one of the many transit and highway projects to receive local Measure R funding. The purpose of this project is to provide a transit connection to the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension linking communities farther east of Los Angeles to the regional transit network, to improve mobility within the project area by enhancing transit options, and to plan for projected growth in a sustainable manner.

Additional considerations supporting the need for the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project include: 1) increased travel demand; 2) the concentration of activity centers and destinations dispersed throughout the project area; 3) more than 50 percent of external trip destinations to Central Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Central Business District come from the project area; 4) approximately 16 percent of the households in the project area do not own a vehicle; 5) high population and moderate employment densities presently creating mobility and accessibility issues; and 6) the high level of automobile congestion on local arterial and highway networks in the project area.

1.5 Project Team

The Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 project team includes the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Metro and consultants, including the Outreach Consultant (Arellano Associates) and the Environmental and Engineering Consultant (CDM/AECOM Joint Venture).

1.6 Purpose of Scoping and Summary Report

The purpose of the scoping period is to announce the project to the public and federal and non-federal agencies so they have an opportunity at the outset of the environmental process to review proposed alternatives, purpose and need, and environmental concerns that are proposed to be addressed in the Draft EIS/EIR. The scoping process encourages participation from a wide array of stakeholders and is designed to obtain input on the alternatives and the environmental documents. Throughout the scoping process, including scoping meetings, the public and agencies have the opportunity to review and comment on the contents of the Draft EIS/EIR.

This Scoping Report is a summary of the methods and tools used to notify and solicit input from the stakeholders and agencies as well as an account of the comments received. This report includes the views of those that participated and assisted in the process. The comments are addressed in Section 3 of this Scoping Report.

2.0 SCOPING PROCESS

2.1 Draft EIS/EIR Scoping Activities

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Metro implemented a multi-tiered comprehensive outreach program targeted to reach the stakeholders within the project area and comply with SAFETEA-LU requirements. To initiate the Draft EIS/EIR process, Metro hosted five scoping meetings - one agency scoping meeting at Metro Headquarter and four public meetings within the project area. In addition to scoping meetings, Metro also participated in various city and stakeholder events as requested by respective groups to enhance the outreach effort and increase awareness of the initiation of the environmental process.

2.1.1 Scoping Outreach Plan

Prior to engaging in the scoping activities, Metro and the outreach team created a Scoping Outreach Plan that outlined a notification process to maximize opportunities for the communities, civic and business organizations, federal and non-federal agencies and elected officials to participate in scoping activities held throughout the public comment period. This plan details the outreach and notification efforts completed prior to and during the scoping period, including: distribution of printed material, public signage, traditional media, social media and project briefings. The following subsections provide detail as to the implemented outreach during the project's scoping period (see Appendix B for Scoping Outreach Plan).

Due to the high number of Spanish speaking stakeholders in the project area, Metro produced all bilingual Spanish and English collateral materials, including meeting notices, e-blasts, presentations, display boards, fact sheets, subtitled videos, helpline and simultaneous translation at all scoping meetings.

2.1.2 Coordination Plan

Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) establishes an environmental review process for transit projects that has now been included in section 139 of Title 23 of the U.S. Code. Section 139 directs agencies to prepare a plan for public and agency participation and comments during the environmental review process. The Coordination Plan describes how the lead agencies will provide opportunities for public and agency input.

2.2 Initiation of Scoping (Notice of Intent/Notice of Preparation)

Federal Law requires a formal Notice of Intent (NOI) to be filed in the Federal Register to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and initiate the NEPA scoping process. On Monday, January 25, 2010, the NOI was filed in the Federal Register, Volume 75, Number 15. The NOI contained a summary of the corridor's transportation needs and the proposed alternatives and identified a public comment period ending on April 14, 2010 (see Appendix C for a copy of the NOI).

Metro also mailed the NOI and scoping information packet to 21 Federal, 5 Native Tribes, 40 State, 26 Regional, and 79 Local, 2 Historical and 4 Educational agency representatives to inform them of the initiation of the Draft EIS/EIR scoping process, preliminary schedule and solicit comments (see Appendix F for a complete list of agencies).

Metro posted the Notice of Preparation (NOP) with the State Clearinghouse. The NOP was recorded with the Los Angeles County Clerk's Office on January 28, 2010. Publication of the NOP with the State Clearinghouse was done in compliance with CEQA requirements (see Appendix D for a copy of the NOP). Publications of the legal notices were also published in local newspapers including the Los Angeles Times, La Opinion and Chinese Daily (see Appendix E for a copy of the legal notices).

Metro provided a public comment period of 80 days, accepting comments beginning January 25, 2010 through April 14, 2010.

2.3 Agency Scoping

2.3.1 Participating Agencies

In accordance with SAFETEA-LU Section 6002 and requirements, Metro in coordination with FTA, prepared and mailed participating agency invitation letters on February 4, 2010 to approximately 177 agency representatives. Participating agencies can include Federal, State, Tribal, Regional and Local government agencies that are interested in the project. Agencies were given until April 14, 2010 from the date of the letter to respond (see Appendix G for a copy of the invitation letter to federal and non-federal agencies and Appendix F for the distribution list). Table 2-1 identifies the agencies that have affirmatively accepted to become a participating agency for the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project.

Table 2-1 List of Participating Agencies
Federal Agencies
Federal Emergency Management Agency
U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service
Department of Housing and Urban Development
U.S. Department of Transportation
Department of Health and Human Services
National Marine Fisheries
Federal Aviation Administration
Transportation Security Administration
Federal Railroad Administration
Department of the Interior, Office of Environmental Policy
State Agencies
California High Speed Rail Authority
California Public Utilities Commission
Regional Agencies
Los Angeles County, Department of Public Works
Southern California Association of Governments
South Coast Air Quality Management District
Local Agencies
City of El Monte
City of Los Angeles
City of Montebello
City of Monterey Park
City of Pico Rivera
City of Rosemead
City of Santa Fe Springs
City of South El Monte
City of Whittier

2.3.2 Cooperating Agencies

Cooperating agencies are, by definition in 40 CFR 1508.5, federal agencies with jurisdiction, by law or special expertise, with respect to any environmental impact involved in the proposed project. State and local agencies can also accept to become a cooperating agency with the agreement of the lead agency. Cooperating agencies are participating agencies by definition; however the responsibilities of the cooperating agencies have a higher degree of involvement and authority in the environmental process (see Appendix H for a copy of the invitation letters to become a cooperating agency and Appendix F for the distribution list). Table 2-2 identifies the three agencies that have affirmatively accepted to become a cooperating agency for the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project.

Table 2-2 List of Cooperating Agencies
State Agencies
California Department of Transportation, Caltrans District 7
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

2.3.3 Agency Scoping Meeting

The NEPA and the CEQA both allow for and encourage public and agency participation during the environmental evaluation phase of any transit project. Therefore, scoping meetings held for the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project followed established federal and state standards and best practices. One agency scoping meeting was conducted on February 18, 2010. The table below provides specific meeting details, (see Appendix I for the meeting sign in sheets and comment cards).

Table 2-3 Agency Scoping Meeting				
Date	Time	Location	Attendees	Comments
2/18/2010	10:00 a.m.	Metro, 1 Gateway Plaza Los Angeles, Windsor Conf. Rm.	21	2

2.3.4 State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Coordination

FTA sent a Letter of Initiation to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) that initiates consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and delegates the authority for Metro to consult directly with SHPO. The letter also included the Area of Potential Effects (APE) maps for the build alternatives and requests SHPO's concurrence with these maps. Metro will be contacting local historic groups and other stakeholders that may have an interest in the project, and will also be contacting and consulting with Native American groups that the State of California's Native American Heritage Commission identified in a scoping letter submitted to Metro dated January 27, 2010. An inventory of properties within the APE and listed in the National Register of Historic Places as well as those potentially eligible for listing is being conducted, and the inventory will be presented to SHPO for concurrence when completed.

2.4 Public Scoping

Public scoping meetings were held throughout the project area on different days of the week, at different times and with easily accessible locations to maximize the attendance and interest in the project. Notification for the public scoping meetings was accomplished through various communications tools including: printed materials, public signage, and social media and briefings. Advertisements were conducted in English, Spanish and Chinese languages. A total of four public scoping meetings were hosted in February 2010, as described in detail in Section 3.4.3 (see Appendix J for a copy of all notification databases).

2.4.1 Notification Databases

Project Master Database

For notification of the scoping meetings, Metro used the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 master project database, assessor parcel information, environmental resource agency list and other project related data files to ensure that the notification was comprehensive and accurate.

The project's master database was initiated during the early scoping period in 2007 and has been refined and updated throughout the AA Study phase. The number of records during the scoping period comprised of 1,713 records and included the following categories:

- Project stakeholders/participants
- Project consultant team
- Regulatory agencies
- Transportation agencies
- Elected officials offices
- Commissions
- City staff
- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
- Public safety agencies
- Religious organizations
- Local libraries
- Community organizations
- Educational institutions
- Chambers of Commerce
- Eastside Phase 1 Review Advisory Committee (RAC)
- Metro VIP list
- Businesses
- Media
- Residents

Property Owner & Occupant List Data

In an effort to ensure communication with the communities surrounding the proposed alternatives, a supplemental property owner and occupant list was developed consisting of 48,396 records. The data included property owners, business and residential occupants within $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile of not only the two remaining build alternatives, but also the other two alternatives that were studied during the AA Addendum. The data covered the following areas:

- Washington Boulevard Alternative
- SR-60 Alternative
- Beverly Boulevard Alternative
- Beverly/Whittier Boulevards Alternatives
- North/south connectors:
 - Rosemead Boulevard
 - Paramount Boulevard
 - Montebello Boulevard

The rationale for incorporating such an extensive property owner and occupant lists was to ensure communication with stakeholders who may have previously learned about the project, when the AA Study identified four build alternatives, but might have been unaware of the refinement to two alternatives prior to initiating the environmental studies.

Agency Database

The agency contact list was provided by the JV and was used to notify the Agency Scoping meeting as well as the other four public scoping meetings. The resource agency database consists of 183 records (see Appendix J).

Other Databases

As part of the scoping outreach, City of Commerce requested that Metro send scoping meeting invitations to approximately 3,200 residents and 36 owners' parcels (see Appendix J).

2.4.2 Printed Materials

Direct Mail Notices

A significant piece of the notification effort for the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 scoping meetings was an invitation postcard mailed to a large cross-section of stakeholders. Metro developed a bilingual English/Spanish, full-color invitation containing a brief project summary, meeting dates, times and locations for hard copy distribution (see Appendix K for a copy of the postcard).

Approximately 50,300 scoping notification postcards were mailed the week of February 1, 2010. This includes the master Metro database, property, occupant, and agency lists. With the addition of the Commerce distribution the number reached approximately 53,500.

Take One's

To take advantage of Metro's existing transit services in the area, a bilingual English/Spanish, full color five-fold notification pamphlet (Take One's) was developed for insertion on train and bus routes. Approximately, 42,700 were placed on Gold Line trains as well as on buses in the project area including Divisions 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 8 (Metro Liner)/Orange Line, 9, 9 (Metro Liner)/Silver Line, 10, 11, 15, 18, 18 (Metro Liner)/Silver Line, 20, 21 & 22. The Take One's included a project map, brief project background and scoping meeting details.

An additional 8,000 Take One's were strategically placed throughout the project area to maximize the public awareness of the scoping meetings. They were placed on public counters at city halls, libraries, community centers, chambers of commerce and elected district offices (see Appendix K for a copy of the Take One's).

School District Meeting Flyer

In addition to the notification direct-mail postcards and Take One's, Metro also coordinated with school districts and schools along the SR-60 and Washington Boulevard alignments to notify parents of the scoping meetings and process. A black and white, English/Spanish, meeting flyer was created providing a brief project overview and scoping meeting details. The school flyer was distributed to schools and district offices that were willing to participate in this outreach effort. Approximately 15,090 flyers were delivered to schools along the two build alternatives (see Appendix K for the meeting flyer).

2.4.3 Public Signage

Street Banners

The project study area has a number of highly traveled corridors that present opportunities to inform the public of the project and scoping period. Therefore, Metro coordinated with project cities to place six roadside banners along some of the major arterials in the study area (see Appendix L for photographs of banners). These banners provided a way for motorists and commuters who frequent the travel corridors to learn about the meetings. Banners were placed at the following locations:

- South El Monte (Santa Anita Avenue/Fawcett Avenue near City Hall)
- Montebello (Garfield Avenue, near Montebello Golf Course entrance)
- Monterey Park (Atlantic Avenue/1st Street)
- Rosemead (Garvey Avenue/River Avenue)
- Other locations
 - Eastside Phase 1, Atlantic Station
 - County of LA District Office of Supervisor Gloria Molina and Don Knabe

Electronic Boards

Metro also utilized existing electronic boards in various cities to communicate scoping meeting information. This was an effective tool to communicate with local constituents or motorist who are used to using the banners for the latest city news. Scoping meeting details were placed on the electronic boards of Pico Rivera and Montebello.

2.4.4 Media

A variety of local and regional daily and weekly newspapers were chosen for placement of meeting advertisements and press releases. The following summarizes the use of media for notification of the scoping period:

Newspaper Advertisements

Metro created a scoping meeting notification ad to place in selected local publications and for their online readership. These publications were chosen based on their circulation boundaries, cultural representation and popularity. Each of the ads listed the dates, times and locations of the four community meetings. Placement and timing of the ads varied based on the scoping meeting most directly connected to the paper's circulation and frequency of the newspaper. The following table lists the publications that ads were placed in and the publishing dates (see Appendix M for copy of ads and proof of publication).

Table 2-4 Newspaper Advertisements			
Newspaper	Circulation	Run Date	Ad size
LEGAL ADS			
Los Angeles Times (Legal Ad)	897,000 (Monday - Friday) and 1,172,000 (Sunday)	February 8	¼ page
La Opinion (Legal Ad)	125,000	February 8	¼ page
Chinese Daily (Legal Ad)	66,000	February 8	¼ page
DISPLAY ADS			
Eastern Group Publications	104,000	February 18	¼ page
Eastside Sun	24,000	February 18	¼ page
Northeast Sun	18,500	February 18	¼ page
Mexican American Sun,	16,000	February 18	¼ page
Bell Gardens Sun	7,000	February 18	¼ page
City Terrace Comet	3,000	February 18	¼ page
Commerce Comet	6,500	February 18	¼ page
Montebello Comet	17,000	February 18	¼ page
Monterey Park Comet	7,000	February 18	¼ page
ELA Brooklyn Belvedere Comet	3,000	February 18	¼ page
Wyvernwood Chronicle	2,000	February 18	¼ page
Vernon Sun	2,500	February 18	¼ page
Whittier Daily News	150,000	February 17	¼ page
Chinese LA Daily	66,000	February 16	½ page
Spotlight on Montebello	22,000	February 2010 Monthly Publication	¼ page
Pico Rivera Community Newspaper	30,000	February 12	½ page
West Valley Journal	10,000	February 11	¼ page
Rio Hondo College, El Paisano	8,000	February 12	½ page
Whittier College, Quaker Campus News	1,200	February 18	½ page

ONLINE ADS			
Whittier Daily News	ONLINE AD	February 8 - 22	110 x 80 px
Facebook Online	ONLINE AD	February 15 - 27	300 x 250 px
West Valley Journal	ONLINE AD	February 1 - 27	200 x 90 px

Earned Media

In addition to placing advertisements in local and regional newspapers, Metro sent project press releases to newspapers that cover the project area. As a result, a number of articles were published during the scoping period. The table below list project articles published during the scoping period (see Appendix N for a copy of the press releases and articles):

Table 2-5 Newspaper Articles	
Newspaper	Publish Date
Downey Business Chamber, Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension is Now Open	February 1
Schurr High School, Spartan Scroll Metro Light Rail Transit Planning to Commence	February 12
Progressive Railroading, Daily News	February 15
Los Angeles Wave, Whittier Pushes for Gold Line Route	April 7

2.4.5 Social Media

A social media ad and marketing campaign was conducted to promote the Metro Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Public Scoping meetings. This social media campaign was implemented in February 2010 and utilized a combination of Metro and local city Websites, Facebook Ads, Facebook Updates to existing fans, and outreach to Los Angeles and Los Angeles-transit oriented blogs. Overall, the campaign was successful in reaching out to new fans and contacting existing fans. The blog outreach garnered a number of articles to different online audiences to promote the public scoping meetings.

Websites

The Metro project website was used to provided project overview and background, scoping meeting information, scoping meeting PowerPoint and presentation video, project collateral materials and Facebook link. All meeting materials included the project website URL link to market and encourage use of the project webpage. Metro contacted and coordinated with all 14 jurisdictions in the study area and Chambers of Commerce to provide links to the project website. The following list includes those who created links and participated in the website outreach strategy (see Appendix O for a copy of the website pages):

- Whittier Area Chamber of Commerce
- City of Rosemead
- City of Pico Rivera
- City of Commerce

- City of El Monte

Facebook

Meeting notices and project information was placed on the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Facebook site and linked to the Metro Los Angeles Facebook page. The following information was placed on the site to engage and notify project fans:

- Early February 2010 – Feature “Eastside Phase 2” Issue meeting notice, fact sheets and highlight project milestones
- February 2010 – Continuation of “Eastside Phase 2” Issue Facebook advertisement and meeting reminders

The project Facebook site had 196 fans prior to the scoping notification period and increased to 347 fans at the end of the scoping period (see Appendix P for a copy of the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Facebook page).

Blogs

Internet and social network sites, including blogs, are becoming increasingly effective communication tools to a growing online/mobile community. Blogging allows community members to place project-related information online that the community can read and react to with online chats and forums discussing project issues. Table 2-6 identifies the list of blogs that highlighted the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project during the scoping period (see Appendix Q for a copy of the blogs that featured the project).

Table 2-6 Blogs	
Blog	Publish Date
ExperienceLA Blog: http://xlablog.blogspot.com/2010/02/this-week-find-info-and-give-feedback.html	February 22
Be A Green Commuter: http://www.beagreencommuter.com/blog/?p=1636	February 22
The Source: http://thesource.metro.net/	February 22
LAist: http://laist.com/2010/02/19/extending_the_gold_line_eastward_ev.php	February 23

E-Blasts

E-blast notification was used frequently during the scoping period to continue to remind project area stakeholders of the scoping meetings as well as public comment opportunities and deadlines. Table 2-7 lists the e-blast titles and dates the information was electronically sent (see Appendix R for a copy of the e-blasts mailed). Also included in Appendix R is the list of e-mail records used to send the first e-blast. This list was derived from the project database; however, during the scoping period, attendees and those providing comments who listed their e-mail addresses were continually added to the list. Therefore, the e-blast list grew from 863 to 1,318 records since the initiation of scoping.

Table 2-7 E-Blast	
E-Blast	Publish Date
Agency Scoping Meeting Invitation (Bilingual English/Spanish)	February 12
Public Scoping Meeting Invitation (Bilingual English/Spanish)	February 16
Public Scoping Meeting Reminder (Bilingual English/Spanish)	February 19
Offer to Brief City Council and Chambers of Commerce	March 11
Offer to Participate in Community Events and/or Provide Briefings	March 26
Public Comment Period Closing Reminder (Bilingual English/Spanish)	April 12
Thank You for Participating (Bilingual English/Spanish)	April 15

2.4.6 Stakeholder Briefings

During the scoping period, Metro communicated with the cities, elected offices, chambers, schools and coalition groups to inquire about other opportunities to publicize scoping meetings and solicit public input. As a follow-up to individual requests, Metro participated in approximately 31 additional stakeholder meetings and events, including tours, community events, coalition meetings, City Council briefings and Chamber of Commerce and legislative briefings (see Appendix S for a copy of the full meeting record matrix).

2.4.7 Additional Outreach

Project Helpline

The project helpline for the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 project was established during the initiation of the AA Study as a tool to provide project information and allow stakeholders to ask questions and provide comments. During the scoping period, a bilingual (English/Spanish) message was recorded providing meeting information and how to provide comments or obtain more project information. The message also encouraged the caller to leave comments or questions. Phone calls were returned within the next business day. The project helpline number (213) 922-3012, has been included in all project collateral materials (see Appendix T for copies of the helpline scripts).

Cable Channels

Many cities have a local cable channel to broadcast city news and functions. Metro prepared and distributed cable slates for all project area cities. Cable slates announced the scoping meeting date and location details closest to the particular city. Phone calls were made to each city as a follow-up to encourage placement of the cable slates on their local cable channels (see Appendix U for a copy of the cable slates).

2.5 Public Scoping Meetings

Metro hosted four public scoping meetings from February 22 through February 27. The scoping meetings were held in various cities within the project area during the evening hours and one Saturday morning meeting to maximize accessibility and convenience for project stakeholders. The public scoping meetings provided the community an opportunity to review and comment on elements of the Draft EIS/EIR study, including the proposed alternatives. The meetings were well attended with over 300 participants and 118 verbal and written comments collected at the meetings (see Appendix V for a copy of individual meetings sign-in sheets, speaker cards and comment cards). Table 2-8 provides meeting location, comments and attendance details for all four public scoping meetings.

Table 2-8 Public Scoping Meetings				
Date/Time	Location	Attendance	Written Comments	Verbal Comments
Monday, February 22, 6-8 p.m.	Pico Women's Center 9214 Mines Avenue City of Pico Rivera	78	5	18
Wednesday, February 24, 6-8 p.m.	South El Monte Senior Center 1556 Central Avenue of South El Monte, CA	86	7	18
Thursday, February 25, 6-8 p.m.	Senior Center at City Park 115 South Taylor Avenue Montebello, CA	65	5	16
Saturday, February 27, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.	Salvation Army SFS 12000 East Washington Boulevard Whittier, CA	82	10	39
Totals		311	27	91

2.5.1 Public Meeting Format

All public scoping meetings began with an open house session followed by a presentation and formal comment period. During the open house session, participants had the opportunity to view project display boards and ask questions or raise concerns directly to project team members stationed around the room (See Appendix Y for copies of the display boards). After the open house session, a PowerPoint presentation was made by Metro staff providing a project overview, explanation of the Draft EIS/EIR process, overview of the proposed alternatives and methods for providing comments during scoping. Meeting participants were encouraged to make a public comment either verbally or in writing. Those wanting to speak were asked to fill out a speaker card and were given two minutes to comment on the project. All verbal comments were documented by a certified court reporter (see Appendix W for individual meeting transcripts).

Interpreters were available at the four meetings to provide simultaneous Spanish translation. Participants could listen to the proceedings in Spanish through audio headsets.

2.5.2 Public Meeting Materials

Handouts

A set of handouts were developed to clearly explain the purpose of the scoping meetings, project process and range of alternatives being considered. These materials were designed as bilingual (English/Spanish) pieces to make the project easy to understand and encourage participation. The following materials were provided at the registration table (see Appendix X for copies of meeting materials):

- Meeting agenda
- Project fact sheets
- Project map
- Invitation postcard
- Speaker card
- Comment sheet

The PowerPoint presentation and copy of display boards were also translated into Spanish and made available upon request. In addition, a Translation of Materials request form was also made available for participants who did not speak English and was translated into five other languages including: Spanish, Vietnamese, Traditional Chinese and Armenian. This form provided a mechanism for non-English speaking participants to understand that project information and materials would be made available upon request.

Display Boards

Display boards were used at all the scoping meetings and set up around the perimeter of the rooms. This allowed participants during the open house session to walk around the room and engage Metro and consultant staff on specific issues and questions pertaining to the project (see Appendix Y for a copy of the display boards).

PowerPoint Presentation

A comprehensive PowerPoint presentation was made at all scoping meetings outlining the project goals, previous studies results, evaluation criteria used to refine the alternatives, Draft EIS/EIR process, proposed alternatives, how to stay involved and how to provide input on the project (see Appendix Z for a copy of the PowerPoint presentation).

Photography

Metro photographed the scoping meetings to document the meetings and capture the public participation at various stages of the meetings (see Appendix AA for a set of images).

2.6 Comments Received

During the 80-day scoping period for the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 project, which extended from January 25 through April 14, 2010, Metro provided a variety of options for the public to learn about the project and provide input, including the following means:

- Verbal – Scoping meeting attendees had the opportunity to provide verbal comments during the public comment session or by leaving a message on the project helpline.
- Written – Comment cards were provided at scoping meetings for written comments and participants were encouraged to submit letters if they preferred, subsequent to the meetings.
- E-mail – Collateral materials also encouraged the public to submit comments via e-mail to yuki@metro.net.
- Metro Website – Comments were accepted via the Metro project website at www.metro.net/eastsidephase2.

3.0 SUMMARY OF SCOPING COMMENTS

3.1 Summary of Substantive Comments

A total of 527 verbal and/or written public comments were received from both agencies and the public, including: elected officials, residents, grassroots organizations, chambers of commerce, developers, hospitals, agencies, educational institutions and businesses (see Appendix AB for copies of all comments received sorted by comment id number). All comments received were summarized, categorized and recorded into the project's electronic database. Each record includes the name of the commenter, agency or affiliation, method of how the comment was received, date the comment was received, topics discussed in the comment, a short summary of the full comment and an identification number tied to the original copy of the comment.

A copy of the comment database is included in Appendix AC, including a categorization of comments by relevant environmental criteria. It should be noted that the combined number of comments (875) listed in the comment database report is greater than the total number of comments received (527) because many of the comments covered several topics in their submission.

In reviewing all the comments received, there is substantial support for each of the two LRT alternatives, SR-60 and Washington Boulevard. Common themes also included the importance of transit connectivity, service to colleges and universities, providing service to underserved areas, concerns regarding environmental and engineering challenges along the two alignments as well as potential economic opportunities for the cities.

Although comments were categorized and sorted by a total of twenty-four environmental topics, these categories can easily be combined into the following six major groupings:

- Comments related to Purpose and Need
- Alternatives
- Configuration
- Stations
- Economic Development
- Potential Impacts

The following subsections provide a summary of each of these six groupings.

3.2 Comments Related to Purpose and Need

Comments related to the Purpose and Need for the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project were generally positive. The following highlights the messages that were consistently mentioned throughout the 527 comments received.

People commenting confirmed that connectivity to the Metro transit network is very desirable and an important need to underserved communities. This was underscored by students and administration officials from Whittier College, Cerritos Community College, Rio Hondo Community College, Cantwell Sacred Heart of Mary High School and East Los Angeles Community College who expressed the importance of this connection to foster an atmosphere of higher learning. Connecting students, faculty and employees to the Greater Los Angeles area provides opportunities for internships, visits to museums and conferences and the cultural arts of Los Angeles.

The need and benefit of connecting neighboring communities together with employment, entertainment and medical facilities were also a strong topic in the comments received. Stakeholders frequently mentioned the importance of creating transit options that would facilitate connections with employment hubs in the City of Commerce, Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital, the Shops at Montebello, Whittier Narrows and downtown Los Angeles.

Intermodal and future connections with other transit systems were also notable mentions in the comments received. Communities near the southern boundary of the project area mentioned the Pacific Electric, BNSF and Union Pacific right-of-ways that could potentially be used to connect the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 project with Fullerton and Norwalk Metrolink stations and Orange County. Cities along the northern boundary of the project area mentioned the opportunity to connect to the planned National Football League stadium in the City of Industry and San Bernardino County.

3.3 Comments Related to Alternatives

As indicated above, there is substantial support for each of the two LRT alternatives, SR-60 and Washington Boulevard. Approximately 80% of the comments suggested a preference for either SR-60 or the Washington Boulevard alternative. The remainder of the comments expressed concerns or ideas for additional routes that should be evaluated. These comments were summarized by whether an individual supported or generally supported a specific alternative (i.e., SR-60, Washington Boulevard, No-Build or TSM).

Although the scoping process did not specifically ask people to vote on an alternative, support for a particular alignment was recorded when the comment specifically called out the name of an alternative. Otherwise, when the comment discussed positive attributes of a specific alternative, the comment was assigned to the general support category. Since the summary of scoping comments is not intended to be a quantitative exercise, this summary is provided only to document the input received.

3.3.1 No Build

Two comments received supported the No Build Alternative.

3.3.2 TSM

One comment was received supporting the TSM Alternative. The commenter opposed the proposed build alternatives due to various concerns and suggested Metro focus on optimizing improvements to the existing bus lines.

3.3.3 SR-60 Alternative - LRT

The SR-60 Alternative received considerable support with approximately 111 positive comments from elected offices, SR-60 Coalition, businesses, school districts, stakeholders, chambers of commerce, colleges and high school students.

Supportive comments mentioned the benefits of the surrounding area's upcoming mixed use developments and destinations, such as the Cascade Mall at Monterey Park, Shops at Montebello and Whittier Narrows. Future destinations, including the National Football League Stadium in City of Industry and San Bernardino County connections, were also mentioned.

Supporters of this alternative also reiterated the positive design features of the route, including low cost, minimal impacts to residential and business communities, higher ridership per mile and the potential to alleviate traffic on the heavily traveled SR-60 Freeway. In an effort to avoid potential issues on the OII Superfund site on the south side of the freeway, a number of comments suggested Metro evaluate moving the route to the north side of the freeway.

Concerns raised for the SR-60 Alternative included the following:

- Low land use density and lack of walkable, pedestrian-friendly destinations will contribute to the route serving as a commuter rail line instead of a light rail system that connects local communities together
- Low ridership
- Potential disturbances to the wildlife at Whittier Narrows
- Potential release of hazardous materials from the OII Superfund site in Monterey Park

3.3.4 Washington Boulevard Alternative - LRT

The Washington Boulevard Alternative received considerable support with 348 positive comments from the community.

Supportive comments and resolutions were submitted from community members, grassroots organizations, elected offices, developers, hospitals, chambers of commerce, school districts, businesses and universities/colleges.

Supportive comments described the alternative as a destination oriented route that could strengthen local economies with meaningful city to city connections. Residents, students and seniors highlighted the need for additional transit options to reach communities and services along the route, such as medical and educational facilities, employment hubs, and access to the greater Los Angeles area. Stakeholders also pointed out that the Washington Boulevard Alternative could potentially reduce traffic on the Interstate 5 (I-5) Freeway and improve air quality.

Comments also mentioned the Washington Boulevard Alternative is highly supported due to its longer route, low cost per mile, high ridership and service to high employment districts along the route. The route was also cited as compatible with the corridor cities land use plans. Some comments encouraged Metro to consider a connection with the Fred C. Nelles mixed use development as well as extending the planned terminus at Lambert Road to the Five Points intersection and possibly even farther to Uptown Whittier, which are all located in the City of Whittier.

One of the comments submitted suggested moving the route to the south side of Washington Boulevard to avoid trees planted on the north side and median of the street.

Concerns for the Washington Boulevard LRT alternative included the following:

- Potential impacts to residential and business communities, including visual, right of way and construction
- Potential safety issues with students in nearby schools and safe routes to school
- Potential gang vandalism in Pico Rivera
- Seismic concerns regarding the Whittier fault line
- LRT may cause traffic disruption and congestion to the existing industrial truck corridor on Washington Boulevard

3.3.5 Other Alternatives

Five comments received suggested other alternatives including:

- Whittier Boulevard to avoid right-of-way impacts to residents and businesses on Washington Boulevard
- Beverly/Whittier Boulevards due to larger residential and commercial concentrations along those corridors
- Beverly Boulevard tunnel with stations at Gerhart, Garfield and Montebello
- Using Metrolink tracks between Whittier Boulevard and Beverly Boulevards
- Re-consider the Beverly/Whittier Greenway Alignment with a subway option on Beverly Boulevard in Montebello.

3.4 Comments Related to Configuration

Approximately 22 comments were submitted regarding the configuration of the Washington Boulevard Alternative. The majority of these comments mentioned the alternative should remain aerial to increase pedestrian and traffic safety in nearby communities. Six of the comments suggested an underground system on Washington Boulevard to not only increase safety but facilitate future connections to Orange County. One comment suggested bringing the Washington Boulevard LRT alignment down to street level on Washington Boulevard and Garfield Avenue through the City of Montebello.

3.5 Comments Related to Stations

Metro received approximately 47 comments related to the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 stations. The topics of the comments ranged from design treatments to adding new station locations and modifying existing plans. One of the most mentioned and supported stations was the terminus on the Washington Boulevard Alternative. A total of 28 comments stated support for the station at Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital in Whittier. Other highly supported stations included the Shops at Montebello and Whittier Narrows on the SR-60 Route.

Suggestions for new stations and modification for existing plans included the following:

- New station at Potrero Grande, along the SR-60 Alternative
- New station north of Washington Boulevard and Garfield Avenue curve, along the Washington Boulevard LRT
- Move Norwalk station on Washington Boulevard LRT alternative 1/4 mile west and use Pioneer High School parking lot as a Park and Ride
- Add or move terminus station on Washington Boulevard LRT alignment farther to Five Points in Whittier or Uptown Town Whittier
- Add or move stations to connect to Metrolink station in Commerce

Two comments submitted also suggested the stations should include well designed weather shelters and have good pedestrian access to encourage walkable communities.

3.6 Comments Related to Economic Development

A large number of comments agreed that the two build alternatives would serve as an economic catalyst providing real benefits to the local business communities. Comments related to both the SR-60 and Washington Boulevard alternatives cited land use plan compatibility as a critical item for planned developments along the routes.

3.7 Comments Related to Potential Impacts

The second most common topic raised in comments after the preference of alternatives was concern for the potential impacts created by the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 project. A total of 320 comments were recorded raising concerns for impacts related to community neighborhoods, parkland, business and economic impacts, traffic, safety, construction and others. The comments on each major category are summarized in the following subsections.

3.7.1 Community and Neighborhood Impacts

Community and Neighborhood impacts centered mainly on the Washington Boulevard LRT alternative. Residents from local communities along the route were very concerned about the proximity of the LRT to their homes, especially in Pico Rivera. Specific concerns/comments included the following:

- Washington Boulevard is a dividing line for local gangs; LRT will potentially be vandalized
- Potential right of way impacts, including the purchase of residential and local businesses
- Potential impacts to property values once system is in operation
- Potential impacts to local schools and churches on Garfield Avenue
- Potential reduction of bus service in project area due to LRT operation

3.7.2 Parklands Impacts

Most of the parkland impact comments were focused on the SR-60 Alternative and proposed station location at Santa Anita Avenue adjacent to the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area. Comments expressed concern for park wildlife due to construction and light rail operations.

3.7.3 Business and Economic Impacts

A significant number of comments received mentioned the concern for the potential negative economic impact the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 project could have on the local businesses during the construction phase of the project. Comments suggested Metro work as a partner with local merchants to mitigate any potential impacts. Other comments included:

- Questions regarding where will Metro find the supplemental funding to build the system
- Opposition to any type of additional taxes to fund the project
- Coordination with California High Speed Rail and build stations for both systems to save resources

3.7.4 Traffic Impacts

Approximately 70 comments addressed the potential impacts on traffic. The majority of these suggested that the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 could potentially relieve traffic on I-5 and SR-60 freeways; however, comments also noted the traffic impacts during construction would be difficult to tolerate.

Additional traffic comments included the following concerns:

- Potential for increased congestion during construction at key intersections where children cross the street for school, residential areas and local churches
- Washington Boulevard is a major truck route; traffic will increase and disrupt the flow

3.7.5 Safety and Security

Approximately 27 comments were related to the safety and security of the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 project. The majority of these comments raised concerns for pedestrian safety, especially school children that cross Washington Boulevard at major intersections.

Additional comments included the following concerns:

- Potential gang issues since Washington Boulevard is a dividing line for two rival gangs in Pico Rivera
- Consider placing protective barriers on the aerial columns, such as jersey barriers to reduce the likelihood of accidents

3.7.6 Construction Impacts

Approximately 100 comments were related to the potential construction impacts. Specific issues raised included:

- Potential traffic impacts and disruption to truck routes
- Potential impacts to businesses along the routes
- Potential noise and dust impacts especially to residential areas
- Potential air quality impacts to nearby residents and business

3.8 Comments Submitted by Federal, State, and Local Agencies

A total of 32 agencies, as well as Operating Industries, Inc. and Southern California Edison, submitted comments. Several agencies submitted more than one set of comments. Table 3-1 lists those agencies providing comments and indicates in parentheses the sets of comments when multiple sets were submitted. Copies of agencies' correspondence may be found in Appendix AB.

Table 3-1 Agencies Submitting Comments During the Scoping Period	
Federal	Regional and Local
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Advisory Council on Historic Preservation ■ Bureau of Land Management ■ Army Corps of Engineers ■ Department of Energy ■ Environmental Protection Agency ■ Fish and Wildlife Service ■ Department of Defense 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Los Angeles County Dept of Public Works ■ Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts ■ Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department ■ Metropolitan Water District of Southern California ■ Southern California Association of Governments ■ South Coast Air Quality Management District ■ Commerce (2) ■ El Monte ■ La Habra ■ La Habra Heights ■ La Mirada (2) ■ Los Angeles (2) ■ Montebello (2) ■ Monterey Park ■ Pico Rivera (2) ■ Rosemead ■ Santa Fe Springs ■ Whittier (11) ■ Gateway Cities Council of Governments
State	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ California High Speed Rail Authority ■ California Public Utilities Commission (2) ■ California Department of Transportation (3) ■ State Lands Commission ■ Native American Heritage Commission ■ Department of Water Resources 	
Other	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Operating Industries, Inc. Landfill Site/New Cure, Inc. ■ Southern California Edison 	

¹Numbers in parentheses indicate the numbers of sets of comments when multiple sets were submitted.

3.8.1 Federal Agencies

Seven federal agencies provided comments. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) encouraged FTA and Metro to begin initiating formal consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Indian tribes, and others pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. If, through consultation, it is determined that the project will adversely affect historic properties or development of an agreement document is necessary, ACHP must be notified and provided appropriate documentation.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) accepted the invitation to become both a cooperating agency pursuant to NEPA and a participating agency pursuant to SAFETEA-LU (See Section 2.3 for more information). The Corps has requested incorporation of appropriate input into the EIS so that they may adopt the EIS to comply with their NEPA responsibilities. Corps approval will be required for proposed alterations to a flood control system and impacts to waters of the United States. In addition, the Corps operates and manages the Whittier Narrows Flood Control Basin and use of that land for the SR-60 LRT Alternative will require Corps review and approval.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also accepted the invitation to become both a cooperating and a participating agency. EPA's comments focused on: 1) air quality; 2) integration with existing transportation facilities; 3) green design and construction; 4) the Operating Industries Inc. (OII) Landfill Superfund Site; 5) impacts to environmental justice communities; and 6) impacts on water resources. In addition, EPA provided input on the purpose and need for the project and range of alternatives for consideration. Any activities that could potentially disturb the OII Superfund Site must also be coordinated through the agency. EPA requested that Metro submit to EPA details of the SR-60 LRT Alternative, including plans, types and durations of activities, anticipated impacts, and proposed avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures to reduce the project's effects on the OII Superfund Site.

The Fish and Wildlife Service requested specific information be included in the Draft EIS/EIR. Their main concern is potential for impacts on federally listed species and habitat types in the eastern half of the SR-60 LRT Alternative as well as the locations of the park-and-ride facilities along that entire route.

Neither the Bureau of Land Management nor the Department of Energy accepted the invitation to be a participating agency since neither intends to submit comments on the project.

3.8.2 State Agencies

Six state agencies submitted comments. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) indicates it will be a cooperating agency per NEPA and a responsible agency per CEQA. Since the project would affect State transportation facilities, Caltrans will require a traffic study prepared per their traffic study guide. The guidance provides specific information relative to both traffic impacts as well as the travel demand methodology used to determine numbers of trips generated, etc. The agency indicates that two other projects have also been proposed to use the SR-60 right-of-way: 1) High Occupancy Vehicle and/or truck lane; and 2) high speed rail segment between Los Angeles and San Diego. Caltrans indicates that the SR 60 right-of-way is not wide enough to accommodate either/both proposed rail projects. They also indicated that Metro should consult with both U.S. EPA as well as the State Department of Toxic Substance Control regarding effects of the project on the OII Landfill Superfund Site.

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) stated they are a responsible agency per CEQA and want to be involved from the project's inception and throughout all project phases. CPUC has authority for issues such as: 1) constructing rail lines over existing streets; 2) at-grade railroad crossings (they recommend reducing numbers of at-grade crossings); 3) standards for warning devices for at-grade highway/rail crossings; and 4) safety oversight of rail fixed guideway systems, including during construction. They stated that fencing should be required for at-grade portions of the rail alignment.

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) indicated they did a search of their Sacred Lands File (SLF) inventory, and no such resources were identified within ½ mile of the Area of Potential Effect (APE). However, Native American cultural resources do exist in close proximity to the APE. NAHC provided a list of tribes and individuals it recommends should be contacted as "consulting parties". The agency stressed consideration of avoidance if significant cultural resources are discovered during project planning and implementation.

The California High Speed Rail Authority stated only that they accept the invitation to be a participating agency. The Department of Water Resources stated they do not want to be a participating agency but would like to be kept informed about the project. They also indicated that Metro has no water rights in the Central Basin so no wells may be drilled nor may water be pumped to dewater any portion of the project unless water rights are obtained in the basin. The State Lands Commission stated they have no lands under their jurisdiction in the project area.

3.8.3 Local Agencies and Others

A total of 19 regional and local agencies, one utility, and one committee overseeing cleanup of the OII Landfill Superfund Site submitted scoping comments.

3.8.3.1 Regional

The Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts indicated they must approve improvements within a Districts' sewer easement and/or over or near a Districts' sewer prior to construction. The Districts own, operate, and maintain only the large trunk sewers in the region. Project plans and specifications that incorporate the Districts' sewer lines will need to be submitted to the agency so they can provide a detailed response to the proposed project. They also note that expansions to the Districts' facilities must be sized and service-phased to be consistent with SCAG regional growth forecasts.

The County's Sheriff's Department recommended a meeting with all law enforcement and fire services agencies along the alignments to get feedback from all. They advocate for a line with dedicated at-grade route or any alternative that excludes (or minimizes) grade crossings. They also recommend provision of adequate parking facilities since the existing ones are over capacity, and this adversely impacts parking near businesses which need parking for their customers.

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California said that their Middle Feeder Pipeline would be affected by both LRT alternatives and want to ensure that the Draft EIS/EIR addresses their concerns about potential impacts on their infrastructure. They declined to be a participating agency; however, they will review the Draft EIS/EIR during the environmental review process.

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and South Coast Air Quality Management District stated only that they accepted the invitation to become participating agencies.

3.8.3.2 Cities

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) indicated that the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would encroach on a LADWP transmission line right-of-way in the vicinity of Washington Boulevard west of Paramount Boulevard. They would like to see plans that include the several items mentioned in their letter. LADWP also provided comments relative to several issues including: LADWP standard conditions for construction activities; ground elevations for the proposed improvements; impacts on transmission line access roads; cathodic protection system; grading; construction of structures, including drainage structures; and tower clearances.

The following cities expressed support for the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative: Commerce, La Habra, La Habra Heights, La Mirada, Pico Rivera, and City of Whittier. In addition, the Gateway Cities Council of Governments endorsed this alternative. Several also passed resolutions endorsing the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative including: La Habra, La Habra Heights, Pico Rivera, Whittier, and the Gateways Cities Council of Governments. Major reasons cited for the support included: best linkage

to the regional transportation system, including the MetroLink; highest ridership potential; better redevelopment opportunities; and improvement to commuter traffic congestion. Where disadvantages of the SR 60 LRT Alternative were mentioned, the main issues raised included: serving mostly long distance commuters rather than the entire community; and potential impacts on Whittier Narrows Recreation Area and wildlife habitat, and the OII Superfund Site. Commerce's support is predicated on a station being located at Washington/Garfield or in close proximity. Pico Rivera would like alternative park-and-ride sites to be evaluated in addition to the one at the Pico Rivera Towne Center. Whittier would like the scoping process to consider the Phase 3 link to Orange County along Lambert Road so that this corridor is preserved and not converted to a bikeway.

The following cities/entities expressed support for the SR 60 LRT Alternative: Rosemead, Monterey Park, El Monte, South El Monte, Montebello, Industry and the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments. Resolutions and letters of support were submitted prior to and during scoping stating their support. In addition, the above cities formed the SR 60 Coalition to serve as a united front in support of the SR 60 Alternative. Major reasons for supporting the SR 60 LRT Alternative included: mobility improvement for both long distance commuters and residents living nearby; compared to the Washington Boulevard LRT comments, the SR 60 LRT Alternative minimizes construction disruption to residents and businesses; enhances transit-oriented development opportunities; potential for less right of way impacts; serves major employment centers and college student population at Rio Hondo and East Los Angeles College. City of Montebello and South El Monte would like construction to be considered on both sides of the SR 60 Freeway instead of only on the south side. Montebello also indicated the project should have a park-and-ride near the Shops at Montebello and should reduce park-and-ride locations elsewhere that may negatively affect city businesses or residences. Rosemead suggested the inclusion of a station at Whittier Narrows Regional Park. Objections to the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative include: minimal development opportunities for Montebello; adverse impacts on homes and schools along the alignment as well as displacements/relocations of businesses and residences; loss of traffic lanes needed to support high truck usage along Washington Boulevard; and limited opportunities to site a rail yard to maintain the light rail vehicles.

Other issues the cities wanted to be addressed for both alternatives include:

- Impacts on traffic, access, parking, security, pedestrian/traffic safety, maintenance, businesses, visual/aesthetics, wildlife habitat, seismic safety
- Potential noise, vibration, dust, and lighting impacts
- Displacements/relocations impacts
- Land use, social, and economic impacts
- Security and maintenance issues associated with park-and-ride

- Construction impacts
- Cumulative impacts including that of the potential high speed rail alignments
- Linkage to other transportation systems
- Mitigation costs

3.8.3.3 Others

Southern California Edison (SCE) indicated that the project has potential to significantly impact their existing 220kV transmission lines (T/Ls), 66kV T/Ls, distribution lines, communication facilities, and future 500 kV T/L generally located near Paramount Boulevard. Their letter requests that Metro submit more detailed project information and provides some initial comments on the proposed project in light of their facilities. SCE specifically mentions the planned Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (TRTP), Segment 7, which was approved by the CPUC and is scheduled to begin construction in 2011. They request early initiation of a joint review of the two projects, stating that if the decision-making is deferred so that it is not included in MTA's environmental process, SCE would likely need to pursue environmental review separately through CPUC. This review would take a minimum of 1 to 3 years to complete.

The Steering Committee for New Cure, Inc. and the Operating Industries, Inc. Landfill Superfund Site also provided comments. They noted their previous extensive coordination with Metro regarding the SR-60 LRT Alternative and provided some comments. The major points addressed include: additional detailed geotechnical studies needed should the SR-60 LRT Alternative be selected; Metro would need to bear any costs for damage to the current landfill remedy or impact on operations and maintenance as a result of the LRT project; the LRT project, regardless of whether at-grade or aerial, would still include buried landfill waste that will need to be handled properly; and because Superfund Sites have specific security requirements, they have concerns about how access would be controlled both during LRT construction and operations.

3.9 Responses to Comments

The purpose of scoping is to provide an opportunity for agencies and the public to comment on the purpose and need, the range of alternatives proposed for analysis, and to help Metro and FTA identify issues that should be evaluated in the Draft EIS/EIR analysis. Metro received a record amount of comments for the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 from agencies, community residents and stakeholders within the project area compared to other current Metro Corridor Studies. All comments will be taken into consideration and examined during completion of the Draft EIS/EIR and are included in this Scoping Report (Appendix AB).

The input received during the scoping period and summarized in this report will be used by Metro to help develop and refine the project description, including refinement of alternatives and options considered for further environmental evaluation. Following the completion of the Draft EIS/EIR, another round of public meetings/hearings will be held to review the findings of the draft environmental documents and solicit public comments. Those comments will be responded to in the Final EIS/EIR and become part of the formal document.

The Scoping Report will be made available on the project website and a hard copy will be maintained in the Metro Library and Metro Records Management Department.