

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the purpose of this Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Division 20 Portal Widening/Turnback Facility Project (Proposed Project), a discussion of the environmental review process, and a description of the organization of this Draft EIR.

The Proposed Project includes widening of the portal for the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) Red and Purple Lines, construction of new storage tracks, and the provision of a new turnback facility. Specifically, the Proposed Project components include:

- Widening the tunnel portal that currently connects the Metro Red and Purple Lines to the Rail Yard, including construction of a new ventilation shaft building;
- Constructing new storage tracks;
- Reconfiguring existing tracks and access roads to accommodate a turnback facility;
- Installing a new traction power substation (TPSS) and emergency backup power generator;
- Expanding the Rail Yard westward, into areas currently occupied by the Citizens Warehouse/Lysle Storage Company building (site of former James K. Hill & Sons Pickle Works Building), the Los Angeles Police Department's (LAPD) Viertel's Central Division Police Garage, and the National Cold Storage facility (also known as National Ice and Cold Storage facility);
- Repurposing an existing building at 100-120 North Santa Fe Avenue for Maintenance of Way (MOW) activities;
- Modifying the 1st Street Bridge piers and superstructure; and
- Vacating portions of three City streets (i.e., Jackson, Banning, and Ducommun Streets east of Center Street).

A detailed description of the Proposed Project is included in Chapter 2.

1.1. PURPOSE OF THIS DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Metro has prepared this Draft EIR for the following purposes:

- To satisfy the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000, et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations [CCR], Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000, et seq.).
- To inform public agency decision makers and the public of the significant environmental effects of the Proposed Project, as well as possible ways to minimize those significant effects, and reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Project that would avoid or minimize those significant effects.

- To enable Metro to consider environmental consequences when deciding whether to approve the Proposed Project.

Metro serves as the “lead agency” for the Proposed Project in accordance with Sections 15051 and 15367 of the CEQA Guidelines, which define the lead agency as the public agency that has the principal responsibility for executing or approving a project.

As described in CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, lead agencies are charged with the duty to avoid or substantially lessen significant environmental impacts of a project, where feasible. In discharging this duty, a lead agency has an obligation to balance the economic, social, technological, legal, and other benefits of a project against its significant unavoidable impacts on the environment. This Draft EIR is an informational document, designed to identify the potentially significant impacts of the Proposed Project on the environment; to indicate the manner in which those significant impacts can be minimized; to identify reasonable and potentially feasible alternatives to the Proposed Project that would avoid or reduce the significant impacts; and to identify any significant unavoidable adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated. Known areas of controversy associated with the Draft EIR include street closures, construction equipment staging areas, truck haul routes, potential impacts to historic resources, construction and operational noise levels, construction-related air quality pollutant emissions, and aesthetics along Center Street.

This Draft EIR was prepared in accordance with Section 15151 of the CEQA Guidelines, which defines the standards for EIR adequacy as follows:

“An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently takes account of environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental effects of a proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in the light of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main points of disagreement among the experts. The courts have looked not for perfection but for adequacy, completeness, and a good faith effort at full disclosure.”

1.2. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

In compliance with the CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, a Notice of Preparation (NOP) was prepared and distributed on October 18, 2017 to the State Clearinghouse, various other public agencies, and the general public for the required 30-day review and comment period. Additionally, scoping meetings were held on October 25, 2017 at Art Share L.A., 801 East 4th Place, Los Angeles, CA 90013, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and November 8, 2017 at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, 244 South San Pedro Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012 from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. to facilitate public review and comment on the Proposed Project and the Draft EIR. A revised NOP was circulated for another 30-day review period from January 3, 2018, to February 2, 2018 due to a revision of the project description (i.e., the addition of 100-120 North Santa Fe Avenue for maintenance activities). The NOP

and Scoping Report, including the NOP comment letters received by Metro, are contained in Appendix A of this Draft EIR. The baseline condition and existing setting for the Draft EIR are those at the NOP date.

In accordance with the CEQA Guidelines, this Draft EIR includes detailed analyses of the following environmental topics:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Cultural Resources
- Energy Resources
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Noise and Vibration
- Tribal Cultural Resources

In addition, the following environmental topics below are comprehensively addressed in Section 4.1 Effects Determined Not To Be Significant of this Draft EIR, in accordance with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines.

- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Biological Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems

This Draft EIR was prepared under the direction and supervision of Metro and reflects the independent judgment of Metro. During the 45-day public review and comment period, public agencies, organizations and individuals may submit written comments concerning the adequacy of the document by email or U.S. mail to:

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One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop: 99-16-9
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Email: LibanE@metro.net

Metro will conduct a public hearing to take testimony on the Draft EIR during the 45-day public review and comment period. After the public review and comment period, written responses to all written comments and oral testimony pertaining to environmental issues received during the comment period will be prepared as part of the Final EIR. As required by CEQA, responses to comments submitted by commenting agencies will be distributed to those agencies for review prior to consideration of the Final EIR by Metro's Board of Directors. Upon the completion of the Final EIR and other required documentation, the Board of Directors may adopt the findings relative to the Proposed Project's environmental effects after implementation of mitigation measures and provide a statement of overriding considerations, certify the Final EIR, and approve the Proposed Project.

1.3. EIR ORGANIZATION

This Draft EIR is comprised of the following chapters:

Executive Summary. This chapter provides a summary of the project description, the public outreach information, project background, environmental impacts, and mitigation measures.

1. **Introduction.** This chapter briefly discusses the purpose of the Draft EIR, identifies the environmental topics, describes the environmental review process and organization, and discusses the intended use of this Draft EIR.
2. **Project Description.** This chapter provides a detailed description of the Proposed Project, including project location and surrounding uses, project history, project objectives, project characteristics, and construction schedule and phasing.
3. **Environmental Impacts Analysis.** This chapter presents the environmental setting, project analyses, and if applicable, mitigation measures, and conclusions regarding the level of significance after mitigation for each environmental impact issue that was determined to have the potential to cause a significant impact.
 - 3.1 Aesthetics
 - 3.2 Air Quality
 - 3.3 Cultural Resources
 - 3.4 Energy Resources
 - 3.5 Greenhouse Gas Emissions
 - 3.6 Hazards and Hazardous Materials
 - 3.7 Noise and Vibration
 - 3.8 Tribal Cultural Resources
4. **Other Environmental Considerations.** This chapter includes possible effects of the Proposed Project that were determined not to be significant; a discussion of significant unavoidable impacts that would result from the Proposed Project; an analysis of the significant irreversible changes in the environment; analysis of the Proposed Project's

potential growth-inducing impacts, related to economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding area; and anticipated permits and approvals.

5. **Cumulative Impacts.** This chapter presents CEQA requirements for cumulative impact analysis and analyzes the potential for the Proposed Project to have significant cumulative effects when combined with other past, present, and “reasonably foreseeable” probable future projects.
6. **Alternatives.** This chapter provides an analysis of a range of reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Project, including the No Project Alternative required by CEQA.
7. **Public Participation and Outreach.** This chapter presents public engagement and community outreach that occurred throughout the environmental process.
8. **Organizations and Persons Consulted.** This chapter lists the organizations and persons with whom Metro consulted during the Draft EIR process.
9. **List of Preparers.** This chapter lists the persons who contributed to the preparation of this Draft EIR.
10. **References.** This chapter lists all the references and sources used in the preparation of this Draft EIR.