

ES EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this document is to evaluate the feasibility of a potential Rio Hondo Confluence Station (Confluence Station) along the West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor Project (WSAB Project). This Rio Hondo Confluence Station Feasibility Study (Feasibility Study), being prepared at the request of the Metro Board¹, also analyzes the potential benefits and challenges of two station options to the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) system and the surrounding community near the Rio Hondo Channel and the Los Angeles River Confluence (Confluence area). *Figure ES 1* shows an aerial view of the Confluence area. The findings presented in this study provide a preliminary understanding of the opportunities, constraints, and challenges of a potential station in this area.

Figure ES 1 Aerial View Looking North Towards the Confluence Station Area



Source: Cityworks Design, 2020

STUDY BACKGROUND

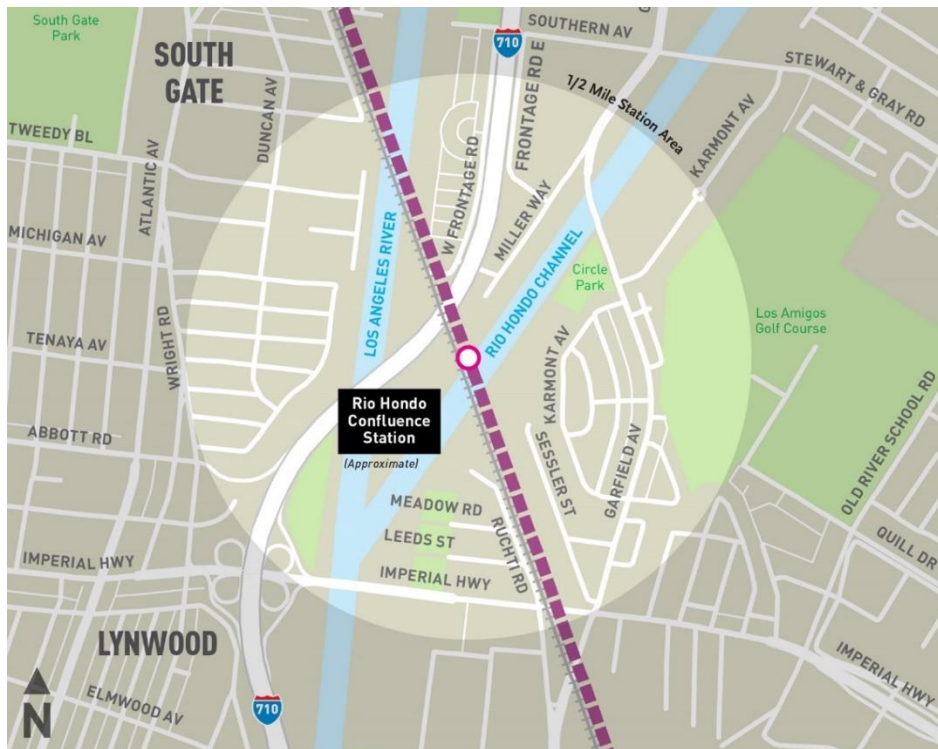
At its December 2018 meeting, the Metro Board approved Motion 15.1 to conduct a feasibility study of a potential WSAB station at the confluence of the Los Angeles River and the Rio Hondo Channel. The WSAB Project alignment will pass over the Confluence area, which offers a unique opportunity to connect LRT with planned community uses in the area, including multi-use trails, regional park space, and a future cultural arts center.

¹ Metro Board, Board Report File # 2018-0773, retrieved on May 20, 2022 from <https://boardagendas.metro.net/board-report/2018-0773/>.

The WSAB Project is an approximate 19-mile light rail transit (LRT) corridor that would connect downtown Los Angeles to southeast Los Angeles County, serving the cities and communities of downtown Los Angeles, unincorporated Florence-Graham community of Los Angeles County, Vernon, Huntington Park, Bell, Cudahy, South Gate, Downey, Paramount, Bellflower, Cerritos, and Artesia. The Metro Board approved the selection of the Locally Preferred Alternative, which would be a 14.8-mile segment that would run from Slauson/A Line to Pioneer. This segment will continue into the final environmental phase, while a cost-effective alignment for the Slauson/A Line (Blue) to Union Station 4.5-mile segment will be studied.

The potential Confluence Station would be located within the Confluence area along the WSAB Project alignment in the City of South Gate, as shown in *Figure ES 2*. The Confluence area and the surrounding communities are some of the most disadvantaged and transit-dependent communities in Los Angeles County, with limited access to parks and high-quality transit.

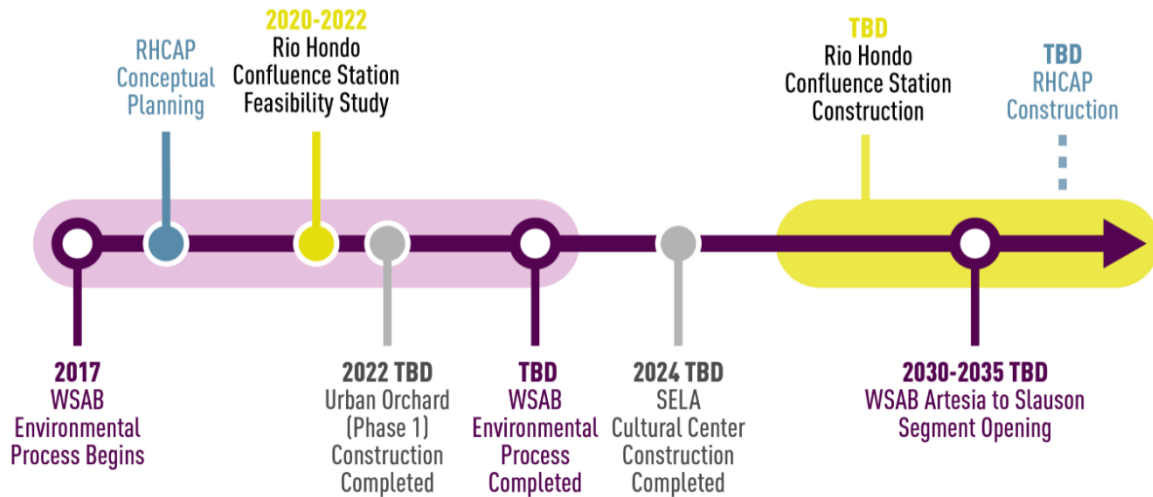
Figure ES 2 Rio Hondo Confluence Station Study Area



Source: Cityworks Design, 2020

However, several related projects, including new public open space and recreational uses, are planned within the Confluence area. *Figure ES 3* conveys a timeline of past, current and future milestones for WSAB and the planned projects in the vicinity of the potential Confluence Station.

Figure ES 3 Rio Hondo Confluence Station Conceptual Timeline



Source: Cityworks Design, 2022

The related efforts (Rio Hondo Confluence Area Project (RHCAP), Urban Orchard, and SELA Cultural Center) contribute to the viability and need of the potential station. Section 2.1 of this report discusses these key related efforts in further detail. A potential station in the Confluence area is expected to provide much needed equitable access to these recreational facilities, for local residents and visitors. It would also connect this community to the regional Metro Rail transit network.

STUDY GOALS

The goals of the Feasibility Study are consistent with those of the WSAB Project, with an additional goal of identifying a potential station configuration that minimizes construction and operational impacts to the WSAB Project. These goals have been utilized as a basis for assessing the overall feasibility of the potential Confluence Station:

- Provide mobility improvements
- Support local and regional land use plans and policies
- Minimize environmental impacts
- Promote equity
- Improve cost effectiveness and financial feasibility
- Minimize construction and operational impacts to the WSAB Project

STUDY TOPICS

As a preliminary planning level study, the Feasibility Study includes a high-level evaluation across multiple subject areas: engineering, urban design, station access, right-of-way, environmental considerations, operations, safety and security, ridership, cost, and construction. The study builds upon work conducted for the WSAB Project by utilizing design and environmental analysis from the WSAB Draft EIS/EIR, for consistency.

STATION OPTIONS

This Feasibility Study analyzed and evaluated two station configurations:

- Center Platform option – station platform over the Rio Hondo Channel
- Side Platform option – station platform between I-710 and the Rio Hondo Channel

Section 3 of this report includes a detailed description and assessment of these station options. Based on engineering feasibility and potential impacts to WSAB operations, among other factors, **the side platform is the more feasible station concept**. *Figure ES 4* depicts the side platform option.

Figure ES 4 Side Platform



Source: STV, 2021

SUMMARY OF KEY METRICS

This Feasibility Study developed key metrics to support the evaluation of the potential Confluence Station relative to the study goals. *Table ES 1* summarizes these key metrics.

Table ES 1 – Summary of Key Metrics

Key Metrics	
Daily Boardings	741 (2030), 853 (2042) - Lower ridership than WSAB mid-line station average: 2,500
Station Mode Share	93% of riders would walk/bike to the station
Cost	\$177 M - \$207 M (in 2020 dollars) ²³
Operations	Adds one additional minute to WSAB travel time in each direction

The following key benefits and challenges have been identified based on the analysis conducted in this Feasibility Study:

KEY BENEFITS

- **Promote equitable access** to the Confluence area and the planned projects for local residents and visitors
- **Connect Confluence area residents to the regional Metro Rail network** via WSAB

KEY CHALLENGES

- **Limited station access represents the essential challenge** that must be addressed to ensure safe and convenient access to the potential station from the surrounding neighborhoods
 - Major investments in new access facilities (such as pedestrian/wheel bridges over the Rio Hondo Channel and Los Angeles River, sidewalks, ADA ramps at crosswalks, and street lighting) are needed for this station to be feasible
- **High Cost:** approximately \$177M-\$207M
 - This estimate includes station elements and needed access improvements
 - This does not include separate FLM improvements yet to be identified or additional cost of needed WSAB design accommodations not-to-preclude a future station
- **Low ridership:** 853 daily boardings by 2042, relatively low compared to WSAB mid-line station average of 2,500 daily boardings
- **Identification of funding:** funding has yet to be identified for this potential station

² Does not include WSAB design accommodations and FLM costs

³ Higher than WSAB mid-line station average costs

- **Timing of related development efforts:** Completion of several related efforts in the vicinity of the Confluence area is essential for the viability of the potential Confluence Station
- Constructing a station on the WSAB alignment will be a major design challenge and would lead to **major disruptions to WSAB rail operations**

FEASIBILITY STUDY RECOMMENDATION

Based on the analysis conducted in this Feasibility Study, a future Confluence Station (with a side platform configuration) is a feasible option but will present some critical challenges. These challenges will need to be addressed, including the high cost of the station and its access improvements, the need to identify funding, and the uncertain timing of future supportive development in the area.

Moving forward, the WSAB LRT project will continue to monitor the status of adjacent station-supportive development projects, coordinate as necessary, and also make LRT alignment accommodations so as not to preclude a future side platform station in the Rio Hondo/LA River Confluence area.