PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 7 as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), propose to improve traffic conditions on Interstate 405 (I-405) starting in the south at Interstate 10 (I-10) and terminating in the north at U.S. Highway 101 (US-101) in Los Angeles County. The proposed project intends to reduce congestion, encourage carpooling and transit, improve trip reliability, reduce degradation of the carpool and general-purpose lanes, increase person throughput, and apply technology to help manage traffic.

Caltrans will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed project which would construct improvements that may include, but not be limited to, the conversion of the existing high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane into a high-occupancy toll (HOT), or ExpressLane, in each direction, or the conversion of the existing HOV lane to an ExpressLane and also adding a second ExpressLane in each direction. The purpose and objective of the proposed project is to improve the utilization of freeway capacity while addressing impacts to the environment and surrounding communities, including historically disadvantaged communities, within the project area.

Caltrans will be the lead agency for the Proposed Project under CEQA and NEPA as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

LOCATION OF STUDY AREA

The Study Area includes portions of the cities of Santa Monica, Los Angeles, Culver City, and unincorporated areas in Los Angeles County, as indicated on the figure below.

ALTERNATIVES

The alternatives currently under consideration are described below.

Alternative 1 (No Build):

The No Build Alternative does not include improvements to the existing lanes along I-405 between I-10 and US-101.

Alternative 2: Convert Existing HOV Lane to One ExpressLane (Standard Lane and Shoulder Widths)

This build alternative would convert the existing HOV lane in each direction, along I-405 between I-10 and US-101, to an ExpressLane. The northbound and southbound directions of the freeway would be restriped within the existing footprint to accommodate one 12-foot wide ExpressLane with a 4-foot wide buffer separating the ExpressLane from the 12-foot wide general-purpose lanes. Dynamic pricing would be deployed in the ExpressLane to ensure trip reliability and traffic flow. Installation of toll and communication infrastructure and modification/installation of overhead signs is required. Alternative 2 proposes to widen the freeway, where necessary, to accommodate an additional

weave lane at ExpressLane ingress/egress locations and maintain stopping sight distance at curves. Non-standard inside shoulders would be maintained in a few locations where constraints exist, and standard 10-foot outside shoulders would be provided where possible. Retaining walls will be provided where required to minimize and avoid right-of-way (ROW) acquisition.

Other improvements include construction of retaining walls and sound walls, utility improvements, and drainage improvements.

Alternative 3: Convert Existing HOV Lane to Two ExpressLanes (Non-Standard Lane and Shoulder Widths)

This build alternative would convert the existing HOV lane to an ExpressLane and add a second ExpressLane in each direction between I-10 and US-101. The freeway would be widened and restriped to accommodate the two ExpressLanes with a buffer separating the ExpressLanes from the general-purpose lanes. Dynamic pricing would be deployed in the ExpressLanes to ensure trip reliability and traffic flow. Installation of toll and communication infrastructure and modification/installation of overhead signs would be required. Alternative 3 proposes to widen the freeway to the outside in order to accommodate the proposed two-lane ExpressLane facility as described. Non-standard lanes and shoulders would be provided to accommodate for the addition of the new ExpressLanes as part of Alternative 3. Retaining walls would be provided where required to minimize and avoid ROW acquisition. The reduction of shoulder and lane widths allows for accommodation of the proposed two-lane ExpressLane facility without significant proposed roadway widening. However, in locations with the following conditions, additional roadway widening may be required:

- 12-foot wide weaving lane at ExpressLane ingress/egress locations
- Widening of inside/outside shoulders to maintain sight distance

Other improvements include construction of retaining walls and sound walls, utility improvements, and drainage improvements.

Alternative 4: Convert Existing HOV Lane to Two ExpressLanes (Standard Lanes and Shoulder Widths)

This build alternative would convert the existing HOV lane, between I-10 and US-101, to an ExpressLane in each direction, and a second ExpressLane in each direction would also be added, while providing standard lane widths, shoulder widths and stopping sight distances. The freeway would be widened and restriped to accommodate the two ExpressLanes with a buffer separating the ExpressLanes from the general-purpose lanes. Dynamic pricing would be deployed in the ExpressLanes to ensure trip reliability and traffic flow. Installation of toll and communication infrastructure and modification/installation of overhead signs would be required. Alternative 4 proposes to widen the freeway to the outside in order to accommodate the proposed standard two-lane ExpressLane facility as described. Retaining walls would be provided where required to minimize and avoid ROW acquisition. Reconstruction of some existing freeway structures would be required to implement Alternative 4's standard roadway cross-section.

Other improvements include construction of retaining walls and sound walls, utility improvements, and drainage improvements.

Alternative 5: Add an Additional HOV Lane (Non-standard Lane and Shoulder Widths)

This build alternative would add an additional HOV lane, between I-10 and US-101, in each direction. The freeway would be widened and restriped to accommodate the two HOV lanes with a buffer separating the HOV lanes from the general-purpose lanes. Alternative 5 proposes to widen the freeway to the outside in order to accommodate the proposed two-lane HOV facility as described. Non-standard lanes and shoulders would be provided in order to accommodate for the addition of the new HOV lane as part of Alternative 5. Retaining walls would be provided where required to minimize and avoid ROW acquisition. The reduction of shoulder and lane widths allows for accommodation of the proposed two-lane HOV facility without significant proposed roadway widening. However, in locations with the following conditions, additional roadway widening may be required:

- 12-foot wide weaving lane at HOV ingress/egress locations
- Widening of inside/outside shoulder to maintain sight distance

Other improvements include construction of retaining walls and sound walls, utility improvements, and drainage improvements.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:

Various environmental and community resources are known to exist within the limits of the study area and will be studied in the EIR. Environmental effects anticipated for study include, but are not limited to: Land Use, Growth, Community Impacts, Utilities and Emergency Services, Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities, Visual/Aesthetics, Cultural Resources/Tribal Cultural Resources, Water Quality and Stormwater Runoff, Hydrology and Floodplains, Geology/Soils/Seismicity/Topography, Paleontology, Hazardous Waste/Materials, Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions/Climate Change, Noise, Wildfire, Energy, Biological Environment, and Cumulative Impacts.

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS:

The formal scoping period began on August 3, 2021 and has been extended to October 1, 2021. Metro and Caltrans held virtual public scoping meetings to provide an overview of the project, summary of the environmental process and issues addressed, and receive input regarding environmental issues and the suggested scope and content of the EIR.

A link to a recording of a virtual public scoping meeting, as well as further information, can be found on the project website at www.metro.net/405expresslanes. Scoping comments can be submitted via regular mail, email, online via comment form, or by phone. Mail comments to: Ronald Kosinski, Caltrans District 7, Division of Environmental Planning, 100 S. Main St., MS 16A, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Email comments to 405expresslanes@metro.net. Submit comments online at

www.metro.net/405expresslanes. Submit comments via phone at (213) 922-4860. Scoping comments must be submitted by October 1, 2021.

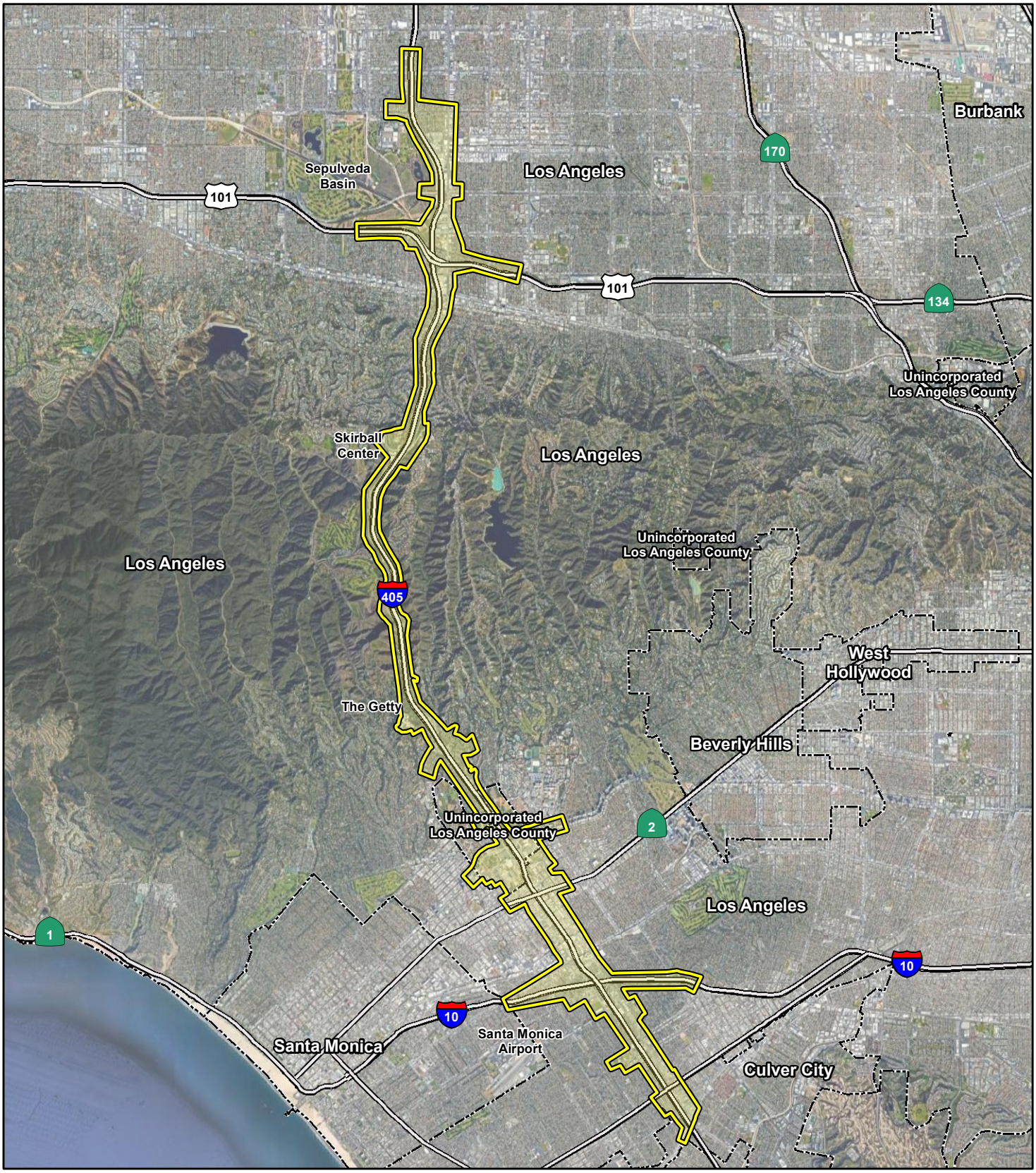

FIGURE 1

LEGEND

Project Study Area

City Boundary

N

0 4400 8800

FEET

SOURCE: Google Maps (2021); WSP (4/21/2020)

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Interstate 405 (I-405) Sepulveda Pass Express Lanes Project

Project Study Area

07-LA-405-PM 29.5/39.8

EA 354330; EFIS 0720000070