



Rio Hondo Confluence Station Feasibility Study Outreach Summary Report *July 2022*

Prepared for:



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I. Study Overview

A. Introduction

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) conducted a feasibility study (Feasibility Study) to evaluate the viability of adding a potential station along the West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor Project (WSAB) at the Los Angeles River/Rio Hondo Confluence (Confluence) in the City of South Gate. The WSAB Project is an approximate 19-mile light rail transit (LRT) corridor that would connect southeast Los Angeles County to downtown Los Angeles. 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 WSAB Project alignment will pass over the Confluence area and a potential station at this site is expected to provide much needed equitable access to planned community uses in the area, including multi-use trails, regional park space, and a future cultural arts center, for local residents and visitors. It would also connect this community to the regional Metro Rail transit network.

This Outreach Summary Report documents the outreach process and efforts that Metro conducted during the Feasibility Study to raise awareness about the study, share study information, and receive feedback from “grass-tops” stakeholders in the vicinity of the Confluence area.

B. Stakeholder Outreach

As part of this Feasibility Study, Metro conducted targeted outreach to promote awareness of the study and engage study area stakeholders, including agency staff, local organizations and communities, and other regional stakeholders. Outreach engagement with community leaders and organizations was primarily conducted via two Stakeholder Forums. These forums offered stakeholders an opportunity for key updates on the Feasibility Study and to provide feedback to Metro staff.

Additional engagement approaches to connect local community members included hosting information booths and “pop-up” booths at popular local destinations and community events. Given its relation to the WSAB corridor, the Feasibility Study team shared study information at shared booths at local events and pop-up information tables held at South Gate, Downey, Paramount and other surrounding communities.



To support these activities, electronic and printed materials were made available on the study website and at stakeholder engagements. The materials helped promote awareness of the study and offered a

variety of ways to contact the study team, including the study webpage, email, helpline, mailing address and Metro’s social media accounts.

Below are the leading outreach activities that were conducted for this Feasibility Study:

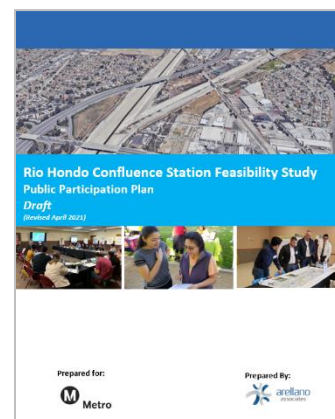
- Two virtual Stakeholder Forums to maintain key stakeholders informed and answer questions
- 15 information booths at nearby community events and pop-up tables at local destinations
- Development of overview fact sheet and study area map
- Development of a dedicated study webpage (metro.net/riohondo) with a study overview, study area map, fact sheet and other resources
- Coordination with the WSAB project team:
 - Study details shared at agency and stakeholder briefings and presentations
 - Distribution of printed materials at public meetings and local events or pop-up information tables
 - Distribution of electronic materials via eblast and other electronic communication
 - Study details featured in the WSAB project webpage
- Coordination with proponents of related efforts, including the Rio Hondo Confluence Area Project (RHCAP) team and Urban Orchard project staff
- Development of a stakeholder database
- To support these efforts, a Public Participation Plan (PPP) was developed at the Study onset

Additional details on the outreach efforts are included in subsequent sections.

II. Outreach Program

A. Public Participation Plan (PPP)

A PPP was developed to outline the approach, strategies and tasks, and schedule of outreach activities in support of the Feasibility Study. The PPP served as a guiding document for integrating external engagement activities to the targeted study area communities, with consideration of the WSAB environmental process and schedule. The study team remained flexible and modified outreach efforts in response to study and community needs.



B. Stakeholder Database

Since the study area is located within the WSAB corridor, the existing WSAB stakeholder database was used as the foundation for this effort.

A query system in Microsoft Access identified pertinent WSAB contacts who are located within the Rio Hondo study area, including those in the cities of South Gate, Downey, Paramount, Lynwood and other representative regional contacts. The mail distribution list for this study included a “grass-tops”-focused

list containing approximately 95 contacts (as of July 2022). An expanded contact list of 538 contacts was prepared in the event that notifications needed to cover a broader area.

Database categories include:

- Academic Institutions
- Active transportation groups
- Agencies (state, local)
- Business Associations
- Businesses
- Chambers of Commerce
- Community groups
- Elected officials (federal, state, county, city)
- Libraries and Recreational Centers
- Environmental groups
- Emergency Responders
- Faith-based organizations
- Health Organizations
- Interested parties
- Media
- Resource agencies
- Service groups
- Transportation groups
- School Districts
- Service clubs

III. Communication Tools

The following tools were developed to facilitate communication with the study team and stakeholders.

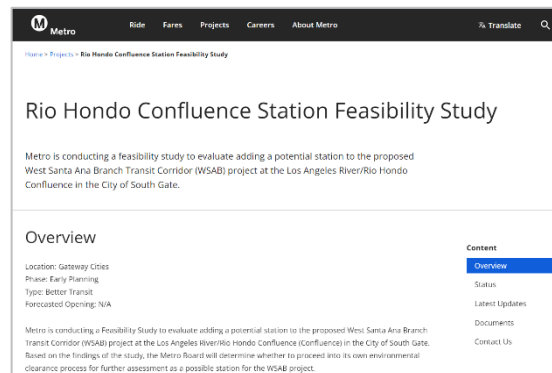
A. Study Email & Phone Number

The email and direct phone number for the assigned Metro Community Relations Manager, Mark Dierking, served as the primary communication tool available to stakeholders. All received communication was coordinated and documented by the study team.

B. Study Website

At the onset of the Feasibility Study, the WSAB project webpage (metro.net/wsab) featured a tab dedicated to “Related Projects” which featured an overview of the Rio Hondo Confluence Station Feasibility Study, including a clear description of the Study’s process being separate from the environmental clearance efforts for the WSAB corridor. This content was featured temporarily before transitioning to a dedicated webpage which allowed room for additional Study details.

The study-specific webpage was created in March 2022 with a Metro website domain (metro.net/riohondo). The webpage features the study overview, status updates, documents and contact information. The documents section contains a relevant Metro Board Report and fact sheet in English and Spanish. The webpage address was featured in all outreach materials and promoted at stakeholder meetings and at local community events.



C. Comment and Meeting Logs

The study team utilized the Smartsheet management platform to track and organize study comments and relevant outreach activities. The original WSAB comment and meeting logs were expanded to allow documentation for Rio Hondo with a filter function for reviewing entries by project. The comment log includes all comments that were received orally, through the helpline, email, letter, website, and meetings or briefings. The meeting log captures all scheduled and completed meetings, including the Stakeholder Forum meetings and information booths/pop-ups. See Section VII of this report for additional details on the information booths/pop-ups hosted for this Study.

IV. Collateral Materials

A. Fact Sheet

A fact sheet was created to provide an overview of the Feasibility Study, including study goals, background, study area map and contact information. The fact sheet was made available in English and Spanish and distributed to stakeholders online (website, eblast, etc.) and as printed copies at in-person outreach engagements.



B. Topic-Specific Fact Sheets

Metro has general fact sheets that have been used to provide information related to this Feasibility Study. The individual fact sheets focus on themes such as environmental review, Gentrification and Displacement, Rail Transit Modes, and others. The fact sheets are available in English and Spanish on the study website and were featured as printed copies at in-person outreach engagements.

V. Stakeholder Forums

A. Stakeholder Forum Overview

Metro hosted two virtual stakeholder forums to provide opportunities for stakeholder engagement and collaboration, and to provide study updates at key milestones. The Stakeholder Forums were composed of local agency representatives serving the study area communities, stakeholders with existing grassroots in the Confluence area, and regional stakeholders that also represent the study area and surrounding cities. These stakeholders provided meaningful input from a community's perspective and in-depth knowledge on the potential station's opportunities and challenges, including how it could benefit its communities and regional interests.

B. Communication with Stakeholder Forum Invitees

Invitations to the Stakeholder Forums were issued with an original notice and two follow up reminders for each of the two meetings. The email distribution list started with 44 key stakeholder contacts and increased to 87 at the end of the Feasibility Study. Invited stakeholders included: agencies, business

organizations, community organizations and representatives, elected offices, as well as environmental justice and transportation groups.

Eblasts were utilized as a tool to inform stakeholders about study updates and upcoming engagement opportunities. To maximize study awareness and stakeholder involvement, the outreach team also conducted targeted phone calls to eblast recipients, particularly for upcoming engagement opportunities.

The table below lists the eblasts issued during the Feasibility Study as well as the engagement results prior to the follow up phone calls placed following most of the engagement invitation distributions.

Table 1 – Eblast Distribution: Study Introduction & Invite to Stakeholder Forum #1

Date	Eblast	Sent	Opens
April 21, 2021	Study Introduction (included study overview, introduction of the team, next steps, and contact tools)	55	19 (38%)
May 13, 2021	Stakeholder Forum #1, Invite	56	21 (41%)
May 21, 2021	Stakeholder Forum #1, Reminder	66	12 (20%)
May 26, 2021	Stakeholder Forum #1, Reminder #2	75	12 (17%)
June 1, 2021	Stakeholder Forum #1, Thank you	87	15 (19%)

Table 2 – Eblast Distribution: Invite to Stakeholder Forum #2

Date	Eblast	Sent	Opens
March 8, 2022	Stakeholder Forum #2, Invite	85	32 (44%)
March 15, 2022	Stakeholder Forum #2, Reminder	87	29 (39%)
March 23, 2022	Stakeholder Forum #2, Reminder #2	87	31 (41%)
April 1, 2022	Stakeholder Forum #2, Thank you	95	34 (40%)

B.1. Stakeholder Forum Materials

Supporting materials were prepared for the Stakeholder Forums, including formal PowerPoint presentations. During the first forum, a Stakeholder Feedback Form was distributed to each participant to capture future invitation recommendations, and station area opportunities and constraints.

C. Stakeholder Forum #1

The first Stakeholder Forum – hosted on Wednesday, May 26, 2021 – brought together 20 participants, comprised of staff from area elected offices, local cities/agencies, related project staff, community representatives, and area interest/advocacy groups. Participants are listed below.

1. Office of California State Senator Lena Gonzalez, District 33
2. Office of LA County Board Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, District 1 (3 participants)
3. Office of LA County Board Supervisor Holly Mitchell, District 2
4. City of South Gate (4 participants)
5. City of South Gate resident
6. City of Downey
7. City of Paramount (2 Participants)
8. Communities for a Better Environment
9. River LA
10. South Gate Chamber of Commerce
11. Trust for Public Land (2 participants)
12. Amigos de los Rios
13. Representative from an unidentified organization

The meeting focused on providing an overview of the Feasibility Study and as a forum for open communication and the exploration of stakeholder interests related to this potential station. The meeting generated two-way communication with the study team, in addition to providing key study information and engaging with participants. The study team covered the following topics during the forum: Overview of the study, station area considerations, design considerations, next steps, and responses to stakeholder questions during a Q&A session

The discussion helped the study team understand stakeholder issues and concerns related to the Feasibility Study, as the team developed the initial engineering, station design concepts, and studied the environmental context, as well as station operation opportunities and challenges.

C.1. Key Themes of Interest to Stakeholder Forum #1 Participants

- **Station Access and Design**
 - Why was this specific location identified?
 - How would access be provided to/from major streets near the Confluence area?
- **Station Operations**
 - How would the potential station impact nearby WSAB stations?
- **Equity**
 - How does the study promote equity?
 - Prioritize access to the station for local residents.
- **Outreach**
 - Requests were made for outreach to specific resident groups and businesses.
 - How long will be outreach be virtual? Certain stakeholders may have challenges with accessing virtual meetings.
- **Funding**
 - Is funding available for this potential station?

Following Stakeholder Forum #1, all invited stakeholders received a copy of the presentation, stakeholder feedback form, and fact sheet.

D. Stakeholder Forum #2

The second Stakeholder Forum – hosted on Thursday, March 24, 2022 – included 14 participants, comprised of staff from area elected offices, local cities/agencies, related project staff, community representatives, and area interest/advocacy groups. Participants are listed below.

1. Office of California State Assemblymember Anthony Rendon, District 63
2. Office of California State Senator Lena Gonzalez, District 33
3. Office of LA County Board Supervisor Holly Mitchell, District 2
4. City of Lynwood (2 participants)
5. City of South Gate (4 participants)
6. Resident of South Gate
7. Trust for Public Land
8. San Gabriel and Lower LA Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (2 participants)
9. Rio Hondo Confluence Area Project/Gehry Partners

As a follow-up to the first forum, Metro shared key updates on station design, technical/environmental analysis and other preliminary findings. During the Q&A session, the study team answered stakeholder questions and addressed comments on a variety of topics, including access and connectivity, ridership, cost and funding, outreach, and the study's relation to WSAB.

D.1. Key Themes of Interest to Stakeholder Forum #2 Participants

- **WSAB**
 - What are current design challenges, considering WSAB?
 - Would this project delay WSAB?
- **Cost/Funding**
 - Is there a cost estimate and how would the station cost compare to a mid-line station?
 - Does the cost include 3% contribution from the city?
- **Access/Connectivity**
 - Why was this location identified and were others considered?
 - How would access be provided between the station and Imperial Hwy?
 - Would there be funding opportunities for station access infrastructure?
 - Would the potential station support the TOD Strategic Implementation Plan for WSAB?
- **Ridership**
 - Is ridership reflective of current or future projections?
 - Consider updating ridership forecasts to reflect other projects in the area and Metro Line 120.
- **Outreach**
 - How will the community be notified when study findings are presented to the Metro Board?
 - Are there outreach opportunities for the general public and monolingual Spanish-speakers?
- **Other**
 - What would prevent the Rio Hondo station from being built?

Following Stakeholder Forum #2, all invited stakeholders received a copy of the presentation and fact sheet.

VI. Additional Meetings and Briefings

During the Feasibility Study, the study team participated in two technical coordination meetings with the Rio Hondo Confluence Area Project (RHCAP) team, which were attended by Gehry Partners, Olin, and Geosyntec. Staff also provided a briefing to the Gateway Cities Council of Governments. Table 5 below lists these meetings. Additionally, the study team shared separate study updates/briefings with the offices of LA County Board Supervisors Hilda Solis (District 1) and Janice Hahn (District 4).

Table 3 – Technical Meetings and Stakeholder Briefings

Type	Agency/Organization	Date(s)
Technical Meeting	Rio Hondo Confluence Area Project (RHCAP) team	February 3, 2020 (in person)
Technical Meeting	Rio Hondo Confluence Area Project (RHCAP) team	March 27, 2020 (virtual)
Study Briefing	Gateway Cities Council of Governments	April 6, 2022 (virtual)

VII. Events

Outreach was conducted at community events to engage stakeholders in the cities of South Gate, Downey, Paramount and Lynwood.

Table 4 – Community Events/Pop-Up Information Booths

Event Name	Event Date(s)	Location
Friday Night Paramount	September 3, 2021	Paramount, CA
Pop-up at C Line (Green) – Lakewood Station	September 9, 2021	Downey, CA
Paramount Farmer’s Market	September 10, 2021	Paramount, CA
Pop-up at Northgate Market	September 14, 2021	South Gate, CA
Pop-up at Cudahy Swap Meet	September 18, 2021	Cudahy, CA
Pop-up at C Line (Green) – Lakewood Station	September 23, 2021	Downey, CA
South Gate Family Day in the Park	October 9, 2021	South Gate, CA
8th Annual Dia de Los Muertos Art Festival	October 30, 2021	Downey, CA
Breakfast with Santa	December 11, 2021	Paramount, CA
Pop up at Northgate Market	January 17, 2022	South Gate, CA
Pop-up at Downey Depot/Transit Center	January 19, 2022	Downey, CA
Pop-up at C Line (Green) – Lakewood Station	January 20, 2022	Norwalk, CA
Azalea Festival	March 17, 2022 – March 20, 2022	South Gate, CA
5th Annual Eco-Friendly Fair	April 16, 2022	Paramount, CA
Friday Night Paramount	May 6, 2022	Paramount, CA