

## R-BU8

## Responses to Comments from Downtown LA Arts District Business Improvement District, Lopez, Estela

**Response to Comment R-BU8-1**

Thank you for this information about the Downtown LA Arts District Business Improvement District (ADBID). Support for the Fully Underground LRT Alternative is noted. The Metro Board of Directors voted on October 28, 2011 to designate the Fully Underground LRT Alternative as the Locally Preferred Alternative. As noted in the introduction to Chapter 2, Alternatives Considered, of the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections and this Final EIS/EIR, refinements made to the Locally Preferred Alternative since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR involve repositioning the 2<sup>nd</sup>/Central Avenue station on the same block, moving it closer to the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Central Avenue. Despite the repositioning, it would still be located on the same block and serve the same communities. The station would still have direct access to the proposed North-South and East-West Lines.

Metro understands the importance of Alameda Street to the Arts District and adjoining industrial areas. It is also Metro's goal to minimize impacts to bus service and traffic flow as a result of the Regional Connector project. The Fully Underground LRT Alternative was developed, in part, with the goal of reducing construction impacts on Alameda Street. No regular at-grade train service is planned through the intersections of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda or Alameda and Temple Streets. Some movement of trains through these intersections may still be needed on an infrequent basis.

**Response to Comment R-BU8-2**

The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8 of this Final EIS/EIR), includes mitigation measures to address construction-related parking reductions in Little Tokyo. Among them, Metro would provide 200 self-parking spaces on the Mangrove property, which would be capable of holding 300 cars if supplemental parking services (such as valet) are implemented. This mitigation to address parking impacts in Little Tokyo would also mitigate the potential for spillover parking into adjacent neighborhoods including the Arts District.

The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative was not designated as the Locally Preferred Alternative for the Regional Connector project. The Metro Board of Directors voted on October 28, 2011 to designate the Fully Underground LRT Alternative as the Locally Preferred Alternative. The Fully Underground LRT Alternative was developed with a primary goal of reducing construction-related disruption, including parking displacement, in Little Tokyo. Metro is focusing its efforts on refining the Locally Preferred Alternative to further reduce impacts, rather than attempting to refine the non-Locally Preferred Alternative alternatives which would have greater overall impacts.

**Response to Comment R-BU8-3**

This elimination of through north-south traffic movement at the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and Hewitt Streets was included in Sections 2.3.6.2 and 3.3.5.2.2 of the Draft EIS/EIR and this Final EIS/EIR. The portal would be surrounded on three sides by safety barriers such as fencing that would

deter illegal pedestrian crossings. There are no streets between Alameda and Vignes Streets that continue north beyond 1<sup>st</sup> Street, so it is unclear how the elimination of the north-south pedestrian crossing at 1<sup>st</sup> and Hewitt Streets would impede access to the area north of 1<sup>st</sup> Street from the central portion of the Arts District. Pedestrians must currently walk to Alameda or Vignes Streets to access this area, and this would not change as a result of the Regional Connector.

Metro has received input from the Little Tokyo community opposing pedestrian bridges in the vicinity of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets. As explained above, such a bridge is not warranted by the Regional Connector project.

#### **Response to Comment R-BU8-4**

Metro looks forward to continued coordination with ADBID. Haul routes would be confirmed with community input, and haul trips would be scheduled at times that minimize disruption, per mitigation measure numbers TR-2 and EJ-21 in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8 of this Final EIS/EIR).

#### **Response to Comment R-BU8-5**

Metro is aware of these residential buildings, and has analyzed the potential noise impacts on all sensitive receptors close to the proposed alignment and construction areas in Section 4.7, Noise and Vibration, of the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections. Noise mitigation measures in the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections have been incorporated into Section 4.7.2 and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8) of this Final EIS/EIR.

#### **Response to Comment R-BU8-6**

Metro will coordinate with the community, including ADBID, regarding construction activities through the Regional Connector Community Leadership Council (RCCLC), as provided in mitigation measure numbers CN-4 and CN-5 in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8 of this Final EIS/EIR). It is Metro's goal to provide timely information to the community.

#### **Response to Comment R-BU8-7**

The operating hours of the Arts District industrial businesses is noted. Metro's commitment to maintain access to businesses during their operating hours is provided in mitigation measure number TR-1 in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8 of this Final EIS/EIR). Metro will continue meeting with ADBID to coordinate planning and construction activities. It is Metro's goal to minimize impacts to businesses.

#### **Response to Comment R-BU8-8**

As shown in mitigation measure number CN-8 of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8 of this Final EIS/EIR), Metro would implement an "Arts District Path" and would invite community and Southern California Institute of Architecture participation in its design. The path would include sidewalk enhancements, way finding, appropriate lighting, and crosswalk improvements.

## Response to Comment R-BU8-9

Bicycle facilities would be incorporated into station designs where feasible per Metro's design criteria. Metro will continue to examine ways to enhance connections between bicycles and transit.

## Response to Comment R-BU8-10

The Metro Board of Directors voted on October 28, 2011 to designate the Fully Underground LRT Alternative as the Locally Preferred Alternative. The Locally Preferred Alternative does not include an underpass on Alameda Street. Metro will coordinate with the community, including ADBID, regarding construction activities through the RCCLC, as provided in mitigation measure numbers CN-4 and CN-5 in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8 of this Final EIS/EIR).

## Response to Comment R-BU8-11

It is Metro's goal to have the 1<sup>st</sup>/Central Avenue station incorporate the identities of both Little Tokyo and the Arts District through design in consultation with the communities and through the implementation of mitigation measure numbers CN-8 and CN-9 in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8 of this Final EIS/EIR).

## Response to Comment R-BU8-12

Thank you for your comment. The Metro Board of Directors voted on October 28, 2011 to designate the Fully Underground LRT Alternative as the Locally Preferred Alternative.

Ms. Dolores Roybal Saltarelli  
 Project Manager, Metro  
 1 Gateway Plaza, MS 99-22-2  
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

September 6, 2011

RE: Metro Public Comment  
**Future 5<sup>th</sup> & Flower Station - Preclusion avoidance**

Ms. Roybal Saltarelli,

This letter is in response to the Regional Connector Supplemental FEIS/R released on July 22, 2011.

As you know, the much needed 5<sup>th</sup> & Flower Station was deleted on October 2010 as a quick mitigation measure to cost overruns, in order to meet a critical funding deadline. However, considering the multi-century lifetime of the Regional Connector, it would be imperative to allow for the re-insertion of the station at a future date in order to serve LA County's location of highest employment density.

Thank you for responding to the community's transit needs by allowing such receptivity to a future 5<sup>th</sup> & Flower Station. Per S-DEIS/R, Chapter 2.0, page 2-1: "However, the project design would not preclude construction of a station at this location as a future, separate project. Also, per S-DEIS/R, Chapter 2.0, page 2-2: "A pocket track, which could also serve as a crossover, would be located beneath Flower Street between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets. This would allow for a possible future station at this location to be constructed as a separate project."

**However, there are two design items indicated in the Supplemental DEIS/R that would preclude a future 5<sup>th</sup> & Flower Station:**

1. The location of a substation between 5<sup>th</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Streets. Per DEIS/R, Chapter 2.0, page 2-2: A traction power substation (TPSS) would be located along Flower Street between 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets in the deleted Flower/5<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Street station location"
2. A sloped grade between 5<sup>th</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> & Streets. Per DEIS/R, Appendix R-1, Engineering drawing C-102, an 0.88% grade is indicated, in lieu of the 0.00% grade indicated on the DEIS/R drawings released in August 2010.

Please forward these design items to Metro staff for correction. Thank you. I've included a portion of Chapter 2.0 and Appendix R-1 for reference. I look forward to the completion of the Regional Connector, but also to the 5<sup>th</sup> & Flower Station, whether concurrent with the Regional Connector or at a later date.

Sincerely yours,

Duane B. Weisenhaus, AIA, LEED AP  
 President/CEO  
 Weisenhaus Architecture

Cc: Ann Kerman, Metro; Hilary Norton, FAST; Bart Reed, Transit Coalition



## Chapter 2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

This chapter discusses how the alternatives studied in the Draft EIS/EIR were developed. All of the proposed build alternatives meet the purpose and need outlined in Chapter 1 of the Draft EIS/EIR.

This chapter includes a detailed discussion of the alternatives identified for additional study and alternatives that were analyzed and subsequently eliminated from consideration. These alternative analyses were performed in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), and all applicable associated guidance.

The Regional Connector Transit Corridor Project Draft EIS/EIR was made available to identified stakeholders, agencies, and the general public for review and comment for a 45-day review period from September 3, 2010 through October 18, 2010. On October 28, 2010, the Metro Board of Directors voted to designate the Fully Underground Light Rail Transit (LRT) Alternative without the Flower/5<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Street station as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). **However, the project design would not preclude construction of a station at this location as a future, separate project.** This chapter has been updated since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR based on refinements to the LPA, which were undertaken in order to reduce impacts. A vertical line in the margin is used to show where revisions have occurred to this chapter since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR.

Based on comments received on the Draft EIS/EIR and input received from community meetings, the following refinements, which are described in further detail in Section 2.3.6 and Section 4.18.2, Construction Impacts - Affected Environment, herein below, were made to the LPA to reduce or avoid previously identified impacts:

- An enhanced pedestrian walkway would be created along the west side of Flower Street from the 4<sup>th</sup> Street and Flower Street area to the existing 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station entrance at 7<sup>th</sup> and Flower Streets.
- At 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and the pedestrian signal to the Japanese Village Plaza (JVP), the tracks would continue underground heading northeast under the plaza and 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets.
- The proposed Little Tokyo/Arts District underground station, 1<sup>st</sup>/Central Avenue station (previously called 2<sup>nd</sup>/Central Avenue station), would be partially located within Central Avenue and the northern half of the block bounded by 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Central Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, and Alameda Street.
- The Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) would be inserted at the property northeast of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets, the Mangrove property (formerly known as the Nikkei development), and transported underground to Central Avenue, where it would begin excavating westward (refer to Section 4.18.2, Construction Impacts- Affected Environment, herein below for more detail).
- Tunnel boring activities from the new insertion site would proceed farther down Flower Street to 4<sup>th</sup> Street instead of ending at the proposed 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street station (refer to Section 4.18.2, Construction Impacts- Affected Environment, herein below for more detail).

## Chapter 2

## Alternatives Considered

- Cut and cover on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Little Tokyo would not be required, which would result in less cut and cover overall during construction (refer to Section 4.18.2, Construction Impacts- Affected Environment, herein below for more detail).
- Relocation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street storm drain would not be required in Little Tokyo (refer to Section 4.18.2, Construction Impacts - Affected Environment, herein below for more detail).

The following refinements were made to the LPA to improve project design:

- A pocket track, which could also serve as a crossover, would be located beneath Flower Street between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets. This would allow for a possible future station at this location to be constructed as a separate project.
- Crossovers could be located north and east of the proposed rail junction: in the tunnel beneath the Mangrove property, and beneath 1<sup>st</sup> Street just east of the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets.
- A traction power substation (TPSS) facility would be located along Flower Street between 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets in the deleted Flower/5<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Street station location.
- Antennas may be used as part of the LRT communication system. Antennas would not be visible from any historic resource and would not intrude on the visual quality of the surrounding neighborhood (refer to Section 2.3.3.7 herein below for more information).

Would preclude a future 5th/Flower Station

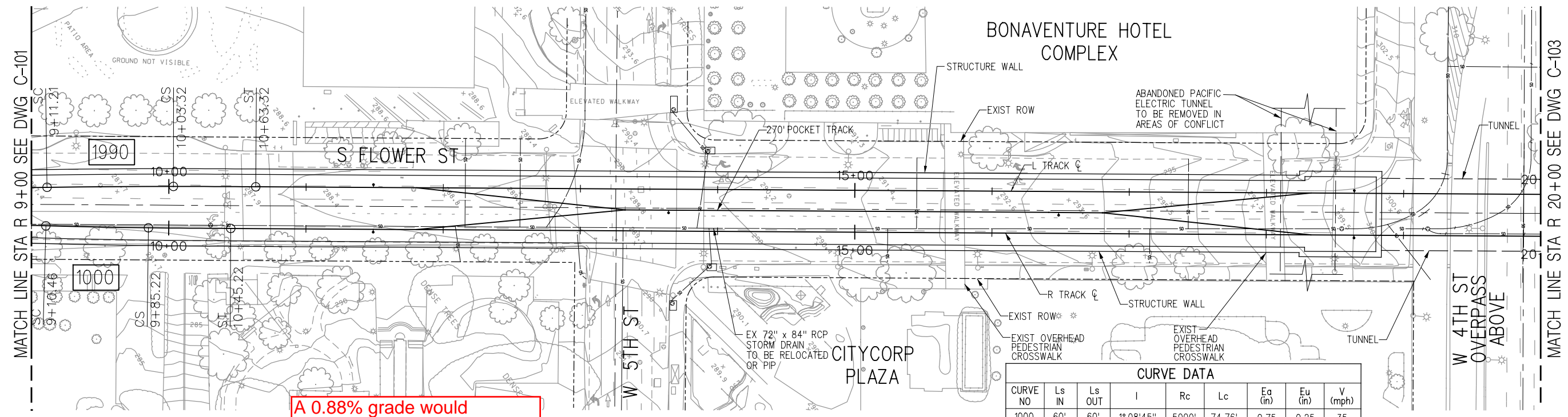
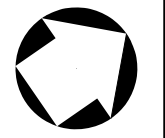
In addition to modifications associated with refinements to the LPA described above, there have been modifications and corrections to this chapter in response to comments received on the Draft EIS/EIR.

The LPA would involve construction and operation of a 1.9 mile LRT connector that would link the Metro Blue Line, Metro Gold Line, and future Metro Expo Line into a single consolidated system. All proposed build alternatives would begin underground at the existing Metro Blue Line (and future Metro Expo Line) platform at 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station and extend in a northeastern direction to a new junction with the Metro Gold Line near Alameda Street. Figure 2-1 shows the LRT routes and stations that were identified for study in the EIS/EIR.

### 2.1 Background and Planning Context

The Regional Connector Transit Corridor alternatives presented in the Draft EIS/EIR build on prior planning studies and projects from the past two decades. In particular, the early studies from 1988 to 1993 focused on extending the Metro Blue Line (light rail line) to Pasadena. The Metro Blue Line currently extends from downtown Los Angeles to Long Beach. This project was later constructed as the Metro Gold Line from Union Station to Pasadena, with the connection to the Metro Blue Line at 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station deferred to a later time. The Metro Expo Line (light rail line), which will extend from downtown West Los Angeles to Santa Monica, was not included in those studies, as it was not yet in the planning stages.

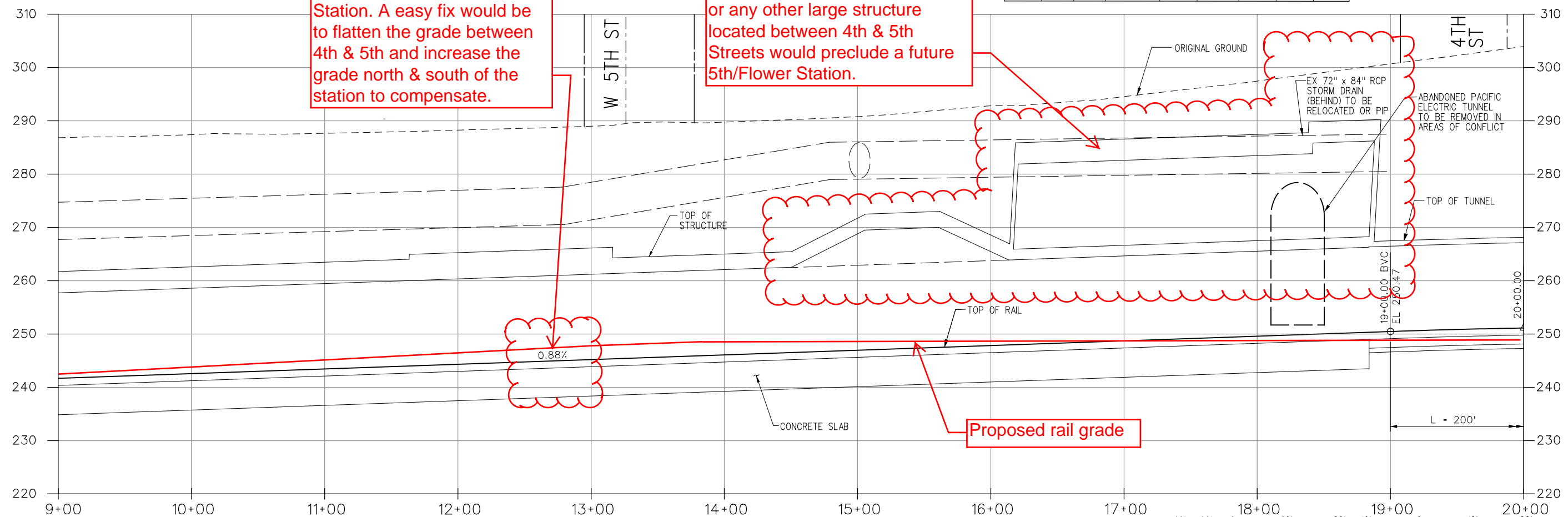
In addition, the Eastside Extension portion of the Metro Gold Line (light rail line), which extends from downtown Los Angeles to East Los Angeles, was initially approved as an extension of the Metro Red Line (a heavy rail subway system). The Metro Red Line currently extends from downtown Los Angeles to North Hollywood. The proposed extension to East Los Angeles was later re-scoped to the currently operating Metro Gold Line to East Los Angeles light rail system.



CURVE DATA								
CURVE NO	Ls IN	Ls OUT	I	Rc	Lc	Ea (in)	Eu (in)	V (mph)
1000	60'	60'	1° 08' 45"	5000'	74.76'	0.75	0.25	35
1990	60'	60'	0° 52' 46"	6000'	92.10'	0.75	0.25	35

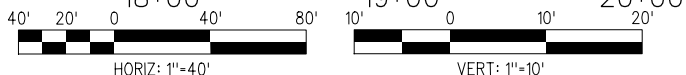
A 0.88% grade would preclude a future 5th/Flower Station. A easy fix would be to flatten the grade between 4th & 5th and increase the grade north & south of the station to compensate.

A traction power station (TPSS) or any other large structure located between 4th & 5th Streets would preclude a future 5th/Flower Station.



PRELIMINARY

R TRACK PROFILE



DESIGNED BY	JS
DRAWN BY	MA
CHECKED BY	
IN CHARGE	
DATE	05/04/2011

REV	DATE	BY	APP	REG NO	EXPIRES	SEAL HOLDER	DESCRIPTION

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**  
 777 S. FIGUEROA STREET  
 10TH FLOOR  
 LOS ANGELES, CA 90017  
 T 213.312-3100  
 F 213.312-3114

**REGIONAL CONNECTOR TRANSIT CORRIDOR**  
**ADVANCED CONCEPTUAL ENGINEERING**  
 TRACK ALIGNMENT  
 PLAN AND PROFILE  
 STA R 9+00 TO STA R 20+00

CONTRACT NO. C0980  
 DRAWING NO. C-102  
 SCALE: HORIZ: 1" = 40'  
 VERT: 1" = 10'  
 SHEET NO. 5 F4-185

Plot Driver=MTA\_HALF\_BW\_PDF.pltcfgr Pentable=MTA\_H\_BW.TBL USER=Al-Mashatm 11:25:02 AM 4/29/2011 ...cadd\EIR\C0980C102.plg

## R-BU9

## Responses to Comments from Weisenhaus Architecture, Weisenhaus, Duane

## Response to Comment R-BU9-1

The Metro Board of Directors voted on October 28, 2010 to designate the Fully Underground LRT Alternative, without the Flower/5<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Street station, as the Locally Preferred Alternative. The Flower/5<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Street station was excluded from the Regional Connector project as a means of lowering costs. The Locally Preferred Alternative would be constructed so as not to preclude addition of a Flower/5<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Street station at a later time as a separate future project.

- The now deleted 5<sup>th</sup> and Flower station site developed during the Draft EIS/EIR included a traction power substation (TPSS) and the area needed for a TPSS site. Although the station has been deleted, the TPSS can still be located at the site/space it had been previously identified for without encroaching into the area that was previously identified in the Draft EIS/EIR for the 5<sup>th</sup> and Flower station. Therefore, the TPSS would not preclude the building of the 5<sup>th</sup> and Flower Station in the future because adequate space underground would still be available.
- Metro's design criteria for maximum slopes at station platforms is one percent. The slope identified is less than one percent; therefore, the slope grade between 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Street is suitable for a station in the future.

September 2, 2011

Mr. Art Leahy  
c/o Ms. Dolores Roybal Saltarelli  
Project Manager  
Metro  
1 Gateway Plaza, MS 99-22-2  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Leahy,

On September 1, 2011, some of the members of The Westin Bonaventure Hotel and Suites' Executive Team met with Metro representatives regarding the Regional Connector Transit Corridor preliminary construction plan. The Metro representatives presented the tunneling plan from Second Street that would continue to Fourth Street on Flower Street. Metro explained that the plan from Fourth Street down Flower to Seventh Street would be done using a "cut and cover method". We also reviewed plans that would set "Construction Work Areas" in two lanes from Fourth Street to Sixth Street on the West side of Flower Street directly in front of the Hotel.

1

This letter is written per the request of the Metro representatives. It explains our objections from an operational standpoint. Please be advised that we will retain legal counsel to analyze the situation from a legal perspective and will revert back to you upon completion of that analysis.

We vehemently oppose the staging of construction work in front of The Westin Bonaventure Hotel. Moreover, any construction work related to the Regional Connector must be carefully planned and implemented to prevent damage to the Hotel and disturbance of our guests. The plan as explained to us at our meeting fails to do this. The Hotel has on average 569,000 guests sleeping in our rooms annually. Out of that total, over 150,000 guests sleep during the hours of proposed construction. These guests are pilots and air crews with airlines who have contracted with us. We have very specific contract language with these guests that guarantee a distraction free environment. The planned work could possibly cause us to lose millions of dollars in business, something we cannot sit back and let happen, especially considering that there are other areas along Flower Street that may be used for construction staging and construction work areas.

2

The Westin Bonaventure Hotel experienced loud noise disturbing our guests resulting in financial loss and shifting in our building during minor excavation and construction on the corner of Fifth and Flower Streets in 2010. The size and scope of the Metro Project dwarfs the prior project. Therefore, Metro must ensure that this project in no way affects the structure of the building and the safety of our guests. To that end, we request that a preconstruction survey be completed by an independent engineering firm and that surveys be completed monthly during construction so as to guarantee that the excavation and construction do not affect the structural integrity of The Westin Bonaventure Hotel.

3

Art Leahy  
September 2, 2011  
Page Two

The Regional Connector Project must also maintain 24-hours per day and 7-days per week the exact same decibel levels that exist today. Construction scheduling for work from Third Street to Sixth Street on Flower Street must be reviewed and approved by The Westin Bonaventure Hotel. Scheduling also must be flexible on short notice due to the short term booking window for both rooms and meeting/catering business at The Westin Bonaventure Hotel. The 2-week and 3-month "look ahead" needs to be modified to daily, two week and three month planning.

4

Noise and vibration monitoring equipment must be installed on all four sides of The Westin Bonaventure Hotel. If noise or vibration exceeds existing decibel levels, construction must stop immediately.

5

Metro must provide business interruption and perceived business interruption coverage for this project. The possibility of loss of existing contracted business must be prevented. Metro must present a plan acceptable to us that addresses our concerns and mitigates our losses.

6

In closing, let me reiterate that we are opposed to the existing preliminary plan and we request that Metro address all concerns in this letter.

7

Sincerely



Michael Czarcinski  
Managing Director

MC:ss

c: [leahya@metro.net](mailto:leahya@metro.net)  
[RegionalConnector@metro.net](mailto:RegionalConnector@metro.net)  
P. Zen  
R. Nicholas  
T. Alder



## R-BU10

## Responses to Comments from Westin Hotels &amp; Resorts, Czarcinski, Michael

**Response to Comment R-BU10-1**

The proposed use of tunnel boring machine excavation extending to 4<sup>th</sup> and Flower Street, and cut and cover excavation between 4<sup>th</sup> Street and the existing 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station is shown in Figure 2-14 of the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections. Drawings showing the proposed construction staging areas for the project are included in Appendix R-1, Locally Preferred Alternative Drawings, of the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections. Some of the construction staging areas in the vicinity of the Westin Bonaventure Hotel and Suites have since been reduced, as reflected in Appendix 1, Locally Preferred Alternative Drawings, of this Final EIS/EIR. Thank you for providing the additional information regarding hotel operations. The concerns in this comment letter are addressed in the responses below.

**Response to Comment R-BU10-2**

Comment noted. Mitigation measures have been identified and will be implemented during construction of the Locally Preferred Alternative, which involve a survey of all structures within 21 feet of the anticipated vibration-producing construction activity to verify the building category, structural condition, and to provide a baseline for monitoring of ground-borne vibration and the potential for ground-borne vibration to cause damage. During construction, use of building protection measures such as underpinning, soil grouting, or other forms of ground improvement, use of lower vibration equipment and/or construction techniques, combined with a geotechnical and vibration monitoring program would be used to protect identified historic and sensitive structures. With implementation of mitigation measures identified in Section 4.7.4.2.1 of this Final EIS/EIR, construction-related vibration impacts to historic and sensitive buildings located within 21 feet of the anticipated vibration-producing construction activity would not be adverse. In addition, consistency with the goals of the applicable local ordinances and implementation of best management practices (BMPs), would ensure that noise levels associated with construction of the Locally Preferred Alternative would not result in an adverse effect under NEPA or a significant impact under CEQA to sensitive land uses.

Metro is committed to working with the surrounding community and businesses prior to and during construction of the project. To reduce community and neighborhood impacts associated with construction, mitigation measure number CN-6 (as identified in this Final EIS/EIR) requires Metro to develop a construction mitigation plan with community input to directly address specific construction impacts in the project area. Metro shall establish and receive input from the Regional Connector Community Leadership Council (RCCLC) in developing the construction mitigation plan. The RCCLC shall consist of representatives from all parts of the alignment area. Metro shall work with the RCCLC in developing the outreach plan, which will notify local communities and the general public of construction schedules and road and sidewalk detours.

Economic and fiscal impacts associated with construction of the project are analyzed in Section 4.14, Economic and Fiscal Impacts, and Appendix BB, Economic and Fiscal Impacts Technical Memorandum, of this Final EIS/EIR.

**Response to Comment R-BU10-3**

Construction noise experienced during the separate non-Metro plaza renovation project is noted. Since this was not a federally-funded transit project, it was not subject to the same stringent Federal Transit Administration (FTA) noise and vibration regulations that will apply to Regional Connector construction. Safety and security mitigation measures were included in Section 4.15.4 of the Draft EIS/EIR to ensure the safety of construction activities. These mitigation measures have been incorporated into Section 4.15.4.2 and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8) of this Final EIS/EIR. Metro does not anticipate that the Regional Connector project will cause any damage to the structural integrity of the hotel. As discussed in Section 4.7.3.5.1 of the Draft EIS/EIR, Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections, and this Final EIS/EIR, Metro would conduct a pre-construction survey of all structures within 21 feet of anticipated vibration-producing construction activity to verify the building category (type of construction), structural condition, and to provide a baseline for monitoring construction effects. This mitigation pertains to both geotechnical and vibration impacts. During construction, use of building protection measures such as underpinning, soil grouting, or other forms of ground improvement, use of lower vibration equipment and/or construction techniques, combined with a geotechnical and vibration monitoring program would be used to protect identified sensitive structures. These mitigation measures were included in Sections 4.7.4.1 and 4.9.4.1 of the Draft EIS/EIR and Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections, Section 4.7.4.2.1 and 4.9.4.2.1 of this Final EIS/EIR, and are included as mitigation measure numbers NV-1 and GT-1 of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8 of this Final EIS/EIR). In the unlikely event that there is damage due to construction, Metro would ensure that any damage caused by construction is repaired to pre-construction survey condition.

**Response to Comment R-BU10-4**

Noise impacts associated with construction of the project are analyzed in Section 4.7, Noise and Vibration, of this Final EIS/EIR. Metro will require the construction contractor to be consistent with the goals of Section 41.40(a) of the Los Angeles Municipal Code, and the goals of other applicable local ordinances, and to implement BMPs to ensure that noise levels associated with construction of the Locally Preferred Alternative would not result in an adverse effect under NEPA or a significant impact under CEQA to sensitive land uses.

As indicated in Response to Comment R-BU10-2, above, Metro will work with the RCCLC to serve all businesses affected by construction of the Regional Connector. The committee shall also be kept apprised of construction progress and upcoming transit, parking, or access changes.

**Response to Comment R-BU10-5**

Comment noted. Please refer to Responses to Comments R-BU10-2 and R-BU10-4, above. Geotechnical and ground-borne vibration monitoring shall be conducted during construction as part of mitigation to avoid any damage to sensitive buildings (Category I, II, III, IV buildings as defined by FTA in Table 4.7-4 of the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections and this Final EIS/EIR) or historic buildings due to construction-induced vibration. Monitors will be located at points of the maximum potential impact as appropriate.

To reduce community and neighborhood impacts associated with construction, a 24-hour live hotline for community concerns regarding construction shall be provided. Residents and businesses shall also be provided with comment/complaint forms during construction. A construction office shall also be placed within the community to provide in-person assistance and services. The hotline and office shall enable Metro to maintain day-to-day contact with the community during construction and provide community members with all project details that may be relevant to the public.

If a noise complaint is filed during project construction, noise monitoring shall be conducted in the vicinity of the area in question. If monitored noise levels exceed FTA construction noise criteria, the contractor shall use all or a combination of the measures identified in Section 4.7, Noise and Vibration, of this Final EIS/EIR to reduce construction noise levels below FTA construction noise criteria.

#### Response to Comment R-BU10-6

Metro would maintain access to the hotel at all times during operating hours, as indicated in mitigation measure number TR-1 in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8 of this Final EIS/EIR). Metro would also adhere to FTA noise criteria and mitigation measures in Section 4.7.4 of the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections to further reduce noise and vibration impacts. These mitigation measures have been incorporated into Section 4.7.4.2 and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8) of this Final EIS/EIR. These mitigation measures would minimize the potential for business disruption. Metro will continue to work with the hotel management to ensure minimization of business interruption. Metro will coordinate with the community, including Westin Bonaventure Hotel and Suites, regarding construction activities through the RCCLC, as provided in mitigation measure numbers CN-4 and CN-5 in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8 of this Final EIS/EIR).

#### Response to Comment R-BU10-7

Opposition to the preliminary information is noted. Metro will continue to work with the hotel management throughout the project process. Metro has addressed the comments in this letter in the responses above.

Responses to Community Groups and Non-Profit Organizations  
 Comment Letters

Comment Letter	Affiliation	Last Name	First Name
R-CN1	Fixing Angelenos Stuck in Traffic (FAST)	Norton	Hilary
R-CN2	The Colburn School	Kardan	Sel
R-CN3	Community Connector Coalition	Broad; Kardan	Eli; Sel
R-CN4	Los Angeles Conservancy	Fine	Adrian Scott

From: Hilary Norton [mailto:HNorton@tpgre.com]  
Sent: Friday, July 22, 2011 9:48 AM  
To: Kerman, Ann  
Cc: Hilary Norton  
Subject: RE: Regional Connector Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections Available

Thank you so much, Ann!

We will ensure that there are LOTS of comments from those who want to see 5<sup>th</sup> & Flower built! ] 1



H  
Hilary Norton  
Executive Director

**FAST - Fixing Angelenos Stuck in Traffic**

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## R-CN1

### Responses to Comments from Fixing Angelenos Stuck in Traffic (FAST), Norton, Hilary

#### Response to Comment R-CN1-1

Comment noted. The Locally Preferred Alternative designated by the Metro Board of Directors on October 28, 2010 does not include a station at 5<sup>th</sup> and Flower Streets. However, the Locally Preferred Alternative would be designed so as not to preclude a station from being added at this location as a separate future project.

**From:** Sel Kardan <[skardan@colburnschool.edu](mailto:skardan@colburnschool.edu)>  
**Date:** September 6, 2011 4:44:54 PM PDT  
**To:** "Roybal, Dolores" <[ROYBALD@metro.net](mailto:ROYBALD@metro.net)>  
**Cc:** "[welbourne@metro.net](mailto:welbourne@metro.net)" <[welbourne@metro.net](mailto:welbourne@metro.net)>, "[ray.sosa@aecom.com](mailto:ray.sosa@aecom.com)" <[ray.sosa@aecom.com](mailto:ray.sosa@aecom.com)>, Susan Keran Solomon <[sksolomon@mac.com](mailto:sksolomon@mac.com)>  
**Subject:** Colburn School Comment on Connector EIR

Dear Dolores:

Thank you for presenting to the Colburn School Facilities Committee this morning. We are aware that the current comment period ends today at 5 PM. Therefore, the Colburn School would like to voice its concern regarding potential noise issues related to the construction and in particular the operation of the proposed Regional Connector Transit Corridor as it passes in close proximity to our campus.

The Colburn School is an internationally recognized performing arts institution with a \$200 million campus that contains two world class concert halls, recording facilities, studios, practice rooms, and rehearsal spaces. Over 200 public performances of music and dance take place annually on our campus including long-standing series by outside performing arts organizations such as the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, LA Opera, and Camerata Pacifica. Additionally, our recording facilities are used for professional recordings year around. Given the importance of optimal conditions for the rehearsal, performance and recording of music, we are understandably concerned by any increased noise that the Light Rail may produce in its construction and daily operation.

We hereby request additional study by Metro of vibration and noise related to The Colburn School property and appropriate to the institution's classification as a premiere performance and recording facility. The Colburn School's use by multiple stakeholders, core mission of performance, and positioning on the cultural corridor warrant sound attenuation equal to that required by The Music Center's Disney Hall. We look forward to working with you in the coming months to better understand our specific needs and requirements and the impact of the connector on our operations.

Sincerely,

Sel Kardan  
 President & CEO  
 The Colburn School  
 200 South Grand Avenue  
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 f: 213-626-1624

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## R-CN2

## Responses to Comments from The Colburn School, Kardan, Sel

**Response to Comment R-CN2-1**

In the area beneath the Colburn School, the LRT tunnels would be located approximately 50 feet below the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Tunnel, within the public right-of-way. There is no special track work planned for this area. Per the as-built drawings of the Colburn School, the foundations of the school are located just south of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Tunnel and do not extend below the depth of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Tunnel.

According to Federal Transit Administration (FTA) land use criteria, the Draft EIS/EIR identified this site as a Category 3 land use, which are institutional land uses with primarily daytime uses that depend on low noise as an important part of operations (e.g., schools, libraries, theaters, places of study, and churches). The noise and vibration analysis using the Category 3 land use classification determined that no adverse effect under NEPA or significant impact under CEQA would occur at the Colburn School during construction. In response to the commenter's request, in Section 4.7, Noise and Vibration, of this Final EIS/EIR, the Colburn School is now analyzed as a Category 1 land use, which are buildings or parks where low noise is an essential element of their purpose (e.g., amphitheaters and concert pavilions). Although the Colburn School is properly considered as a Category 3 land use in this analysis, if the Colburn School were a Category 1 land use, there is a potential for ground-borne noise generated during construction and operation of the Locally Preferred Alternative to impact the Colburn School facilities. Please refer to Section 4.7, Noise and Vibration, of this Final EIS/EIR for a detailed analysis of noise and vibration impacts to the Colburn School. In an abundance of caution, Metro shall apply similar construction and operational mitigation measures that were identified for the Walt Disney Concert Hall, for the Colburn School. After implementation of the mitigation measures, ground-borne noise impacts at the Colburn School would be reduced to not adverse under NEPA and less than significant under CEQA. Refer to Section 4.7.4.2 for a list of mitigation measures identified for the Colburn School.

# Community Connector Coalition

Advocates for the  
Completion of the  
Missing Link in  
Los Angeles Rail Transit

August 30, 2011

✓ Ms. Dolores Roybal Saltarelli, AICP  
and Regional Connector Team, Metro  
One Gateway Plaza, MS 99-22-2  
Los Angeles, California 90012-2952

Mr. Ray Tellis, Team Leader  
Federal Transit Administration  
888 South Figueroa Street, Suite 1850  
Los Angeles, California 90017

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Community Connector Coalition is a growing group of property owners, stewards, and users on and around Bunker Hill, the Historic Core, Civic Center, Little Tokyo, and the Arts District. Among its supporters, the Coalition counts office building owners and tenants, hotel building owners, residential building and unit owners and tenants, and cultural and educational institutions.

We welcome this opportunity to comment on the Regional Connector, in connection with your circulation of the July 22, 2011, Supplemental EA / Recirculated Sections of the Draft EIR. Our review of the revised Chapter 2 and the revised portions of Section 4.18.2, especially relating to Construction Impacts -- and specifically those impacts related to the narrow Second Street and its myriad underground utilities, in particular the very large Los Angeles County storm drain -- leads us to respectfully submit these comments / suggestions now.

The Coalition recognizes that one of the most significant public transit investments currently being undertaken in Los Angeles County is the Regional Connector Transit Corridor Project. The Coalition seeks to maximize, for members of the traveling public, transit accessibility to and from the multiple, diverse destinations surrounding the three planned stations of the Regional Connector.

To achieve that goal, the Regional Connector first has to be built.

One very simple route adjustment will allow the Connector to be built at substantially less cost, while improving community access and eliminating several property conflicts and other impacts along the route. We believe that these proposed modest changes to Metro's currently proposed alignment and station locations lessen environmental impacts. In this letter, we have organized our comments and our recommended changes around the stations.

Using a modestly moved Regional Connector route, travelers on the Blue Line, the Expo Line, and the Gold Line -- from the southern, western, northeastern, and eastern parts of Los Angeles County -- will have improved access *to and from* these lines through *more convenient* passenger portals.

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Community Connector Coalition to  
 Metro Regional Connector Team  
 August 30, 2011  
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**Bunker Hill Station:** This station should have its passenger portal at the TOP and CENTER of Bunker Hill. The Bunker Hill Station portal should be located on Second Street adjoining Grand Avenue . . . not one level lower down and nearer the western edge of the Hill, over on Hope Street across from Kosciuszko Way. The location of the present passenger portal requires almost all riders to walk up a very steep hill, on streets primarily designed for automobile access to Lower Grand and to garages, rather than designed for pleasant pedestrian experiences. There is just “no there, there” at Kosciuszko and Hope.

We believe that there still is time to optimize the locating of the Bunker Hill Station so that its passenger portal can be constructed where it should be -- essentially, on Grand Avenue. We also believe that there will be construction economies (and reduction of construction impacts) for Metro in so doing. We know that there will be long-lasting patronage advantages gained by having Bunker Hill’s only subway station portal situated at the TOP of the Hill, on Second Street and Grand Avenue. It is at this location that riders will find most of the Hill’s offices, residences, and cultural institutions, plus the County government center and Civic Park -- within only a one or two block walk north or south along Grand Avenue. Just one block further north is the Cathedral and the High School for the Visual and Performing Arts. Just one block further south is the Central Library and more hotels. (See the accompanying drawings.)

**Broadway / Civic Center Station:** We suggest you study a modified route that turns northeast from Second Street, at Hill Street, and proceeds 45 degrees across the currently vacant Federal courthouse parcel. (See the accompanying drawings.) This modification accomplishes numerous cost-saving and public-serving purposes, while significantly reducing construction impacts. *First*, being off-street, this station location allows much less expensive cut and cover construction of the station box, whose portal will be at Broadway and First Street. This station location will be less expensive because the alignment will not be as deep because it will have crossed *north of* the Second Street storm drain and *over* the Red Line tunnel. *Second*, the station will be substantially less expensive because it no longer requires construction under that same Los Angeles County Flood Control District Second Street storm drain. *Third*, this new location will allow a pedestrian passageway to be easily constructed between the existing Red/Purple Line Civic Center Station mezzanine and the new Regional Connector Broadway / Civic Center Station mezzanine. Providing a second direct passenger connection to the Red/Purple Line at Civic Center will help alleviate the crowded conditions where all such transfers would occur at 7th and Metro Center. *Fourth*, this location will allow a 45-degree curve to continue the route east under wider First Street (apparently with far fewer utilities conflicts).

**Little Tokyo / Arts District Station:** The Connector’s route adjustment in this neighborhood provides construction cost savings and reduced construction impacts on the Little Tokyo community. In this revised location (see the accompanying drawing), the temporary construction impacts on businesses fronting First and Second Streets and Central Avenue are reduced almost entirely. The new station will be partially underground and open to the sky, and it will be located next to where the existing station is now, east of Alameda Street, north of First Street, on the Mangrove Estates site. This approach also allows for integration of the new Little

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Community Connector Coalition to  
Metro Regional Connector Team  
August 30, 2011  
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Tokyo / Arts District Station into future development on this parcel. Construction still will be staged at the Mangrove Estates site, and the connection of the east-west lines will be a simple straight line under First Street. The new route also will eliminate the significant, permanent construction impacts on the properties south of First Street (that result from the present alignment under Second Street – which requires significant demolition or disturbance). Similarly, “cut and cover” construction impacts on Central Avenue, south of First Street, will be eliminated by the new route.

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The main difference that this Little Tokyo / Arts District Station relocation makes in Regional Connector service, from what is currently proposed by Metro, is that the first westbound transfer station (between the Regional Connector’s east-west and north-south lines) will be a few blocks west, at Broadway / Civic Center, instead of at Little Tokyo / Arts District.

All of these modest amendments -- on Bunker Hill, at Broadway / Civic Center, and at Little Tokyo / Arts District -- increase the probability of the Regional Connector ultimately being built because costs are lowered significantly . . . for example, by: (1) eliminating the substantial civil / bridge / street work at Second and Hope Streets; (2) decreasing the excavation depths for the three stations; (3) eliminating the conflicts with the Second Street storm drain; (4) building the stations on and under the edges of now-vacant *government* parcels - - the County’s Parcels Q and W on Bunker Hill, the Federal (GSA) parcel for the Broadway / Civic Center Station, and the City’s Mangrove Estates parcel for the Little Tokyo / Arts District Station (with that City site also being used for the tunnel access, staging, and dirt removal east of the main parts of Little Tokyo); and (5) not building on private property, except for tunneling a bit under the Broad Museum.

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The Community Connector Coalition’s interests are on Bunker Hill primarily. But we know that there is no benefit to transit riders on Bunker Hill if there is no Regional Connector. Therefore, the Coalition looks forward to working closely and aggressively with you and your consultants so that this simple route adjustment, with its several preferable alternatives (or the best parts of them) still can be achieved. What is designed now will be what the Los Angeles public, and its visitors, experience for the remainder of this century. If what is designed now is not the most cost-effective route, we worry that funding may fall short and that the needed Regional Connector might even not get built. We want to help insure that it does. You may contact us through our representative, Stacey A. Sullivan, Esquire. She may be reached at Hill, Farrer & Burrill, 300 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90071-3147. Her telephone number is 213-621-0871, and her email is SSullivan@hillfarrer.com. Thank you.

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Very truly yours,  
  
  
for the Community Connector Coalition

CCC:hs  
Encl.: Route Map Drawings  
cc: LACMTA Board Members and Executives



OVERVIEW, MASTER PLAN, COMMUNITY EVENTS, UPDATES, CONTACT US, HOME

### MASTER PLAN

Posted June 10, 2005

#### THE PARCELS - BUILDING SITE (LARGER VIEW)

[back to MASTER PLAN main page](#)

#### SITES U + M

- RESIDENTIAL 50-60 UNITS
- RETAIL CENTER 10-15 BLOCOS
- RESIDENTIAL 10-15 BLOCOS
- RETAIL PARKING 100-120 2-3 BLOCOS



#### SITE Q

- CULTURAL RETAIL 2-3 BLOCOS
- RETAIL + RESIDENTIAL 45-50 BLOCOS
- RETAIL SERVICES 2-3 BLOCOS
- RESIDENTIAL 10-15 BLOCOS

#### SITE W

- RESIDENTIAL 25-30 BLOCOS
- RETAIL SERVICES 2-3 BLOCOS
- RETAIL PARKING 100-120 2-3 BLOCOS
- CULTURAL RETAIL 2-3 BLOCOS

#### DEVELOPMENT BLOCKS

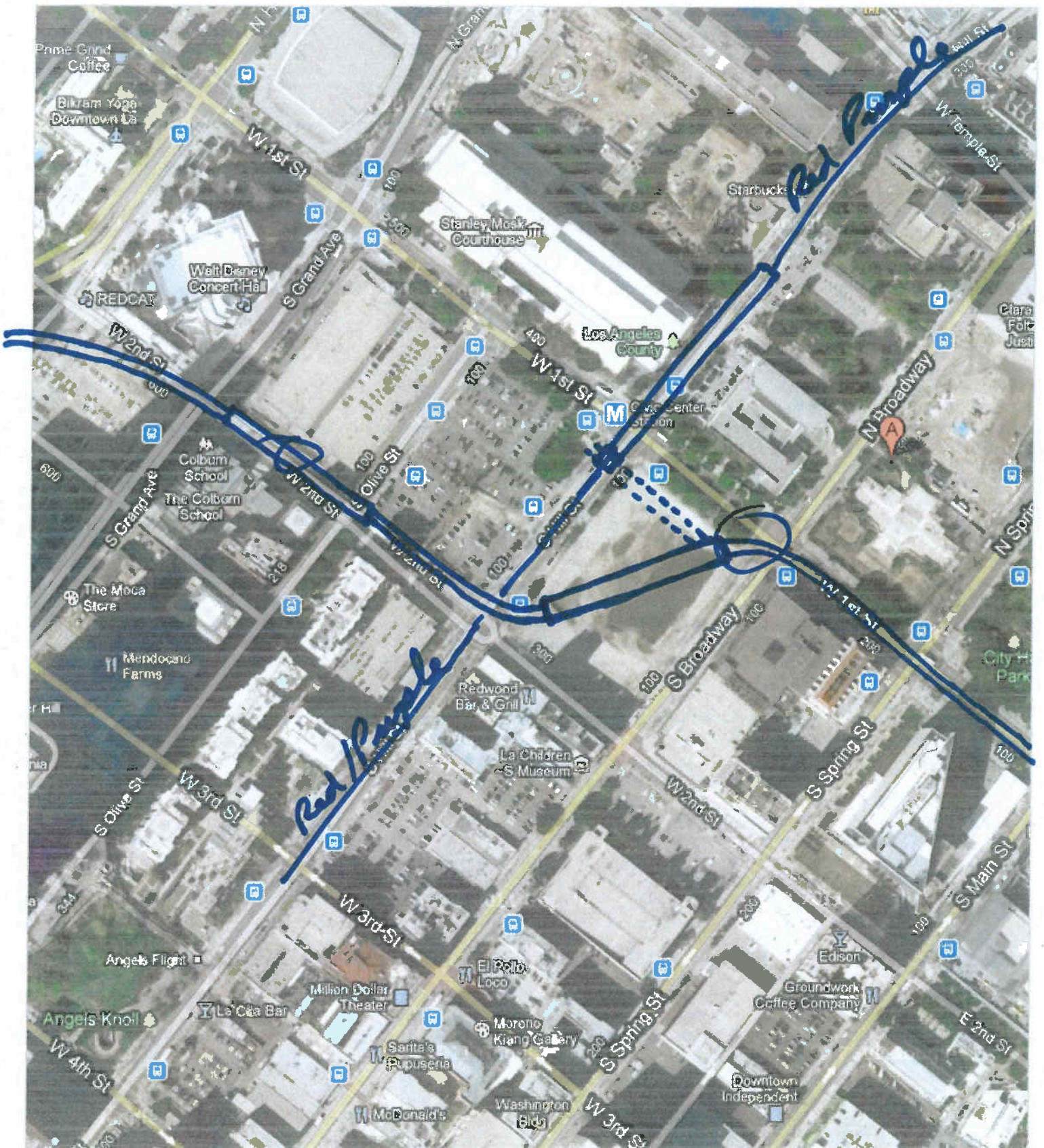
#### GRAND AVENUE

*Red / Orange*

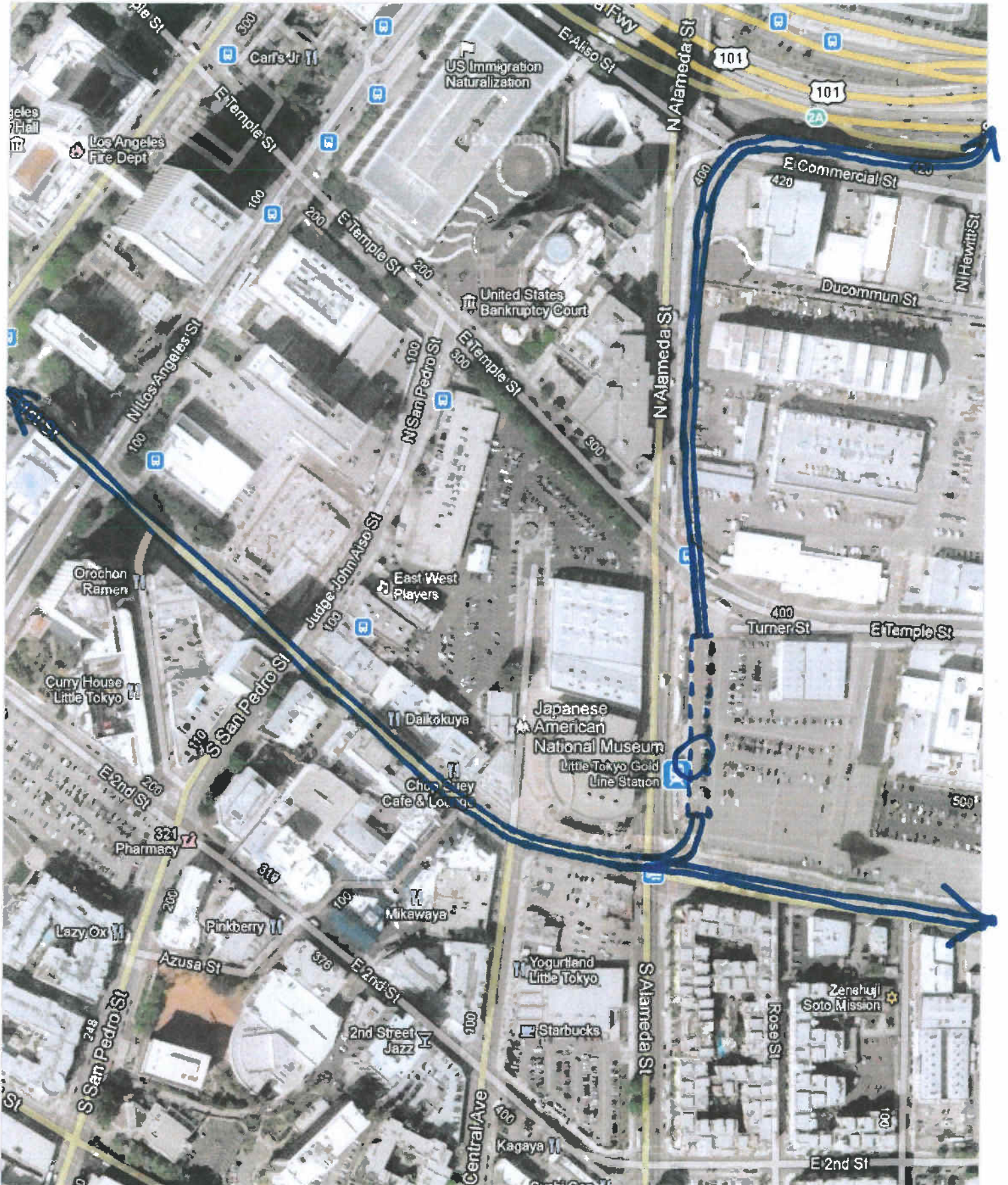
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To see all the details that are visible on the screen, use the "Print" link next to the map.



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**R-CN3****Responses to Comments from Community Connector Coalition, Broad, Eli; Kardan, Sel****Response to Comment R-CN3-1**

We thank you for your comment and appreciate your participation. Metro initiated the Alternatives Analysis study in 2007 and has conducted extensive engineering studies, environmental analysis and an extensive community outreach program that included meetings with property owners and the general public since the inception of the project. Based on these efforts over the last four years, various alignments and station locations were studied including those similar to the one proposed in the letter submitted August 30, 2011. The Locally Preferred Alternative designated by the Metro Board of Directors in October 2010 and the subsequent refinements identified in the Supplement EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections represent the results of this effort.

**Response to Comment R-CN3-2**

Metro agrees with maximizing transit accessibility to and from multiple destinations surrounding the three planned stations. Metro also agrees that in order to accomplish this, the Regional Connector must first be built. As stated, Metro initiated the project development process with the Alternatives Analysis in 2007 and studied 36 different alternatives comprised of various alignments, station locations, and configurations. These alternatives were based on previous studies as well as newly introduced alternatives developed in conjunction with extensive community input. The alternatives studied have been screened over time after extensive engineering, environmental analysis, and public input. The refined Locally Preferred Alternative is the result of this effort. At each major milestone in this process, the Metro Board of Directors has been presented with the results and refinements of the undertaken studies when significant changes have been made to address community concerns, environmental issues, or engineering analysis.

Metro has reviewed the recommended modifications to the Locally Preferred Alternative in light of the environmental analysis, modifications, and Alternative Analysis previously conducted.

**Response to Comment R-CN3-3**

Metro's design efforts for this station have focused on both connecting to the heart of Bunker Hill and ensuring potential connections to the Flower Street corridor and areas west of Flower Street not currently well served by transit. Metro agrees that a station entrance on Grand Avenue at the top of Bunker Hill at 2<sup>nd</sup> Street would be a great opportunity. However, based on our previous engineering analysis and due diligence, Metro's technical teams identified several technical challenges which make the alignment and station location described in the August 30, 2011 letter more costly than the Locally Preferred Alternative station location and difficult to achieve. The following is a brief, and by no means exhaustive, summary of those obstacles:

- Grand Avenue is approximately 20 feet higher in elevation than Hope Street.
- The proposed station box elevation and modification of the alignment is limited to the minimum depth of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Tunnel. The LRT tunnel must traverse beneath the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street tunnel to get from one side of Bunker Hill to the other.
- Based on utility records, the proposed station location described in the August 30, 2011 letter would place the alignment in conflict with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street storm drain and require the relocation of the storm drain as it crosses over the existing Metro Red/Purple line tunnels.
- In addition, the proposed (August 30, 2011 letter) station box location is located below County-owned property between Grand Avenue and Olive Street which contains a large parking structure and has previously been entitled for the major multi-billion dollar, high-rise Grand Avenue Project. In its letter submitted on October 15, 2010 in response to the Draft EIS/EIR, Related Companies was concerned with additional structure impacts to the Broad Art Foundation Museum, currently under construction, and Grand Avenue Project site. A large portion of this or other Grand Avenue Project property would be needed to stage construction for the station. Considering the steep slope on this side of Bunker Hill as compared to the Locally Preferred Alternative's 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street station site, extensive shoring of Grand Avenue and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street would be required. It would also require that the planned Grand Avenue Project be reconfigured in order to accommodate the station. At the end of construction, a portion of property or other adjacent Bunker Hill property would be needed to house the station entrance, ventilation and emergency shafts, and other ancillary facilities.
- Finally, as the alignment heads west from the proposed (August 30, 2011 letter) station location, it may need to traverse beneath a portion of the Walt Disney Concert Hall. Walt Disney Concert Hall has a multi-level subsurface parking structure beneath it and foundations that extend approximately 80-100 feet below the surface. Building protection and noise and vibration considerations have previously been evaluated and would need to be re-evaluated and a subsurface easement obtained if the alignment traverses under the Walt Disney Concert Hall. The current refined Locally Preferred Alternative does not traverse under Walt Disney Concert Hall and is deeper than the proposed Aug. 30<sup>th</sup> alignment. The proposed (August 30, 2011 letter) station location may be refined to avoid traversing under the Walt Disney Concert Hall; however, due to its raised profile, mitigation measures beyond those currently planned would likely be needed for building protection and to reduce noise and vibration.

#### Response to Comment R-CN3-4

From 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street, the proposed (August 30, 2011 letter) alignment diverts north from 2<sup>nd</sup> Street at Hill Street and traverses through a vacant site owned and planned by the federal government for a new federal court house. As discussed with the federal government in 2007 and again confirmed in 2011, the site currently has an allocation of \$400 million for the proposed federal court house. It is identified as an active site and has already been certified under the NEPA process. The amount of property required for the station at this location is greater than the station identified as part of the refined Locally Preferred Alternative since it is entirely off-street. Therefore, the property acquisition costs would be substantial. In addition,

another site for the federal court house would need to be identified or a redesign of the current facility would be required to accommodate the proposed (August 30, 2011 letter) station. Neither the relocation of the courthouse or redesign were considered as cost-effective or desirable during the alternatives analysis or Draft EIS/EIR phases. Furthermore, the location of the proposed (August 30, 2011 letter) Grand Avenue station is within approximately 450 feet of the August 30, 2011 letter Broadway Station and Civic Center Metro Red/Purple Line station and approximately 900 feet from the Locally Preferred Alternative's 2<sup>nd</sup>/Broadway station. This very close proximity reduces the coverage area and could adversely impact ridership. Moreover, the location of the station and alignment proposed in the comment letter would not avoid the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street storm drain relocation construction costs similar to those associated with the Locally Preferred Alternative.

#### Response to Comment R-CN3-5

We appreciate the input on the alignment and station location in Little Tokyo. Metro has conducted extensive engineering and environmental analysis and has worked closely and frequently with the Little Tokyo community and representatives to develop the proposed refined Locally Preferred Alternative design from late 2007 and continues to date. The refined Locally Preferred Alternative design reflects substantial community input and currently maintains extensive support from the Little Tokyo and Arts District communities.

Here are some technical challenges with the proposed alignment and station location in the August 30, 2011 letter.

- The station location and configuration would allow riders from the Little Tokyo and the Arts District communities to only access the North-South operation as the station is north of the East-West Alignment. This would reduce the accessibility of East Los Angeles riders to the businesses and services in Little Tokyo. This would reduce ridership at a location predicted to have a significant number of boardings per the refined Locally Preferred Alternative. This would also create significant issues for this environmental justice community.

The turning radius from 1<sup>st</sup> street to the Mangrove property and then to the existing LRT bridge over the US 101 Freeway would not meet Metro design criteria and would create significant safety and operational issues at the connection to the existing LRT bridge over 101 Freeway. This turning radius is more extreme than the curve proposed at 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Central Avenue per the Locally Preferred Alternative. Metro is proposing to increase the turning radius in the refinement in the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections. However, the turning radius from 1<sup>st</sup> Street to the Mangrove property is even more extreme because at the same time it is turning north, the alignment also needs to rise to reach the existing LRT bridge over the US 101 Freeway. LRT vehicles have a limited ability to both come down an incline and immediately enter a curve. Such a design may result in derailment and is prohibited by Metro's design criteria. The LRT needs a minimum 200-foot radius curve to connect to 1<sup>st</sup> Street and still maintain a reasonable operating speed. This radii limitation is without the additional concern of turning on an incline.

- The turning radii limitation also makes the proposed (August 30, 2011 letter) station location infeasible when combined with the 270-foot long tangent for the station platform. The station platform length when combined with the design criteria limitation of a one

percent slope will not allow adequate depth to both meet the subsurface crossing of Alameda/1<sup>st</sup> Streets and the incline up to the US 101 bridge crossing.

### Response to Comment R-CN3-6

The proposed modifications represent a new alternative with elements previously studied and screened out based on engineering, environmental analysis and community input. There are several project “critical constraints” in the Aug 30<sup>th</sup> proposal that render this proposal more expensive than the Locally Preferred Alternative.

### Response to Comment R-CN3-7

Metro agrees that Bunker Hill is a prime station location. As indicated, since 2007 Metro has conducted extensive engineering, environmental analysis, and community input to evaluate, screen, and develop the refined Locally Preferred Alternative. Metro will continue to meet with representatives of the Connector Community Coalition to review the technical challenges, costs, and schedule impacts associated with the proposed alignment. The Metro analysis does not support these proposed modifications or reconsideration of alternatives to replace the refined Locally Preferred Alternative.



September 6, 2011

**Submitted by email**

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 Federal Transit Administration  
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 Los Angeles, CA 90012  
 Email: [roybald@metro.net](mailto:roybald@metro.net)

**Re: Regional Connector Transit Corridor Project Supplemental EA /Recirculated Sections of the Draft EIR**

Dear Mr. Tellis and Ms. Saltarelli:

On behalf of the Los Angeles Conservancy, thank you for the opportunity to comment on Metro's Regional Connector Transit Corridor Project Supplemental Environmental Assessment/Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report (Supplemental EA/Recirc DEIR). The Los Angeles Conservancy is the largest local historic preservation organization in the United States, with over 6,000 members throughout the Los Angeles area. Established in 1978, the Conservancy works to preserve and revitalize the significant architectural heritage of Los Angeles County.

The Conservancy previously submitted comments in October 2010 for the Regional Connector Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIS/EIR). Subsequently, we met with Metro and its project team to discuss impacts to historic resources and potential mitigation measures as part of the Regional Connector project. While it is unfortunate that alternatives to demolition of the California Register-eligible Atomic Café/Señor Fish have not been fully explored, we submit the following comments to ensure meaningful protection of historic resources is included as part of the proposed project.

**I. Atomic Café/Señor Fish Building, 416 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street**

Under the Fully Underground LRT Alternative, selected by the Metro Board of Directors as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) in October 2010, the proposed route would require

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demolition of the S. Kamada Restaurant/Atomic Café/Señor Fish/Coast Import Building (Atomic Café/Señor Fish Building) at 416 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street. Located at the southwest corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Alameda in Little Tokyo, the one-story building dates from the early twentieth century but is best known and culturally significant as the location of the Atomic Café. Owners Minoru and Ito Matoba first opened the restaurant at another location in Little Tokyo one year after the bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, and moved it to the building at 416 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street in 1965. At this location, the Atomic Café was popular with intellectuals as a late night hang-out, and under the direction of the Matobas' daughter, Nancy, became a destination for the emerging punk rock music scene in the 1970s and 1980s. Today the building houses Señor Fish, which continues the decades-long tradition as a gathering place for an eclectic crowd of artists, musicians, and intellectuals.

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The Draft EIS/EIR determined the building to be eligible for the California Register of Historic Resources for its direct association with a pattern of events linked to Japanese-American: as the site of an early Japanese restaurant, as well as its long-time identity as the iconic Atomic Café. As such, it is considered a historic resource under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and its demolition for an underground station at 1<sup>st</sup> between Central Avenue and Alameda Street would constitute a significant adverse impact to a historic resource under CEQA.

#### **a. Mitigation Measures Can Be Strengthened to Reduce Impacts**

As mentioned in our October 2010 Draft EIS/EIR letter, CEQA sets a higher bar for adequate mitigation measures as compared with federal Section 106 review by requiring the lead agency to evaluate and adopt all feasible alternatives and mitigation measures that avoid or substantially lessen impacts on historic resources. While Metro has proposed additional mitigation measures for potential relocation, salvage and integration of building components, or keeping portions of the building intact for use in the 1<sup>st</sup>/Central Avenue station, none of these options provide sufficient specificity to fully mitigate the loss of a historic structure. Nor are the effects of the demolition reduced to a level of insignificance. As such, it is a faulty assumption to conclude in the Supplement EA/Recirc DEIR that implementation of the proposed mitigation measures would reduce adverse impacts to a less-than-significant level.<sup>1</sup>

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To eliminate the significant adverse impact, we urge Metro to consider creative design options in the Final EIR that relocate or reengineer the station portal in order to retain the Atomic Café/Senor Fish Building in place. This may include temporarily relocating the building offsite or elsewhere onsite during construction, designing the station to maximize the vacant space around the building, or incorporating all or a significant portion of the existing building as an entryway to the underground station. While we recognize that saving the building presents some inherent challenges, in terms of the scope and intent of the proposed project, creative approaches could be further explored.

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<sup>1</sup> Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Regional Connector Transit Corridor, Supplemental Environmental Assessment/Recirculated Sections of the Draft Environmental Impact Report, July 22, 2011, Page 4.12-33. In order for adverse impacts to be less than significant, a proposed project would need to comply with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* or ensure the historic resource retains its eligibility for state or local landmark listing. See CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5.

In addition, in our experience, solely offering the Atomic Café/Senor Fish Building for relocation without an adequate receiving site secured and financial resources committed rarely results in a successful preservation outcome of the historic resource according to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* (the *Standards*). If relocation remains a mitigation measure, we urge Metro to actively seek an appropriate and feasible new site for the building and provide incentives such as the funds dedicated to demolition to defray the relocation expense.

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The Conservancy appreciates Metro's offer to provide an exhibit commemorating the history and significance of the Atomic Café/Senor Fish Building but it should be noted that documentation and interpretative programming under CEQA does not meaningfully reduce the impacts of demolition of a historic resource.<sup>2</sup> We urge Metro to continue its engagement with the Little Tokyo community and work with them and the Japanese American National Museum in developing an interpretive program at the new station to tell the full and layered story of the Atomic Café and its role as a significant cultural landmark in Los Angeles. This may include incorporation of parts of the physical structure into the station if all efforts to rehabilitate or relocate the building are unsuccessful. It may also involve incorporating some new construction as well as retaining the existing building or portions therein. As an example, under Attachment A, we are including a project that blended old and new through a creative design approach that attempts to visually relay the important role and cultural significance of a historic resource.

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## II. Historic Resources Potentially Impacted by Vibration and Differential Settlement

The Supplemental EA/Recirc DEIR identified twelve California Register-eligible historic resources along the proposed route that could potentially be impacted by construction-related vibration; all except the Higgins Building also are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, eight National Register and/or California Register-eligible properties could be potentially damaged by differential settlement due to tunneling and cut and cover construction.

The Conservancy appreciates the details and additional requirements for studies, surveys, monitoring, and contractor best practices near historic resources to avoid adverse impacts from ground-borne vibration and differential settlement. This is particularly important for the earliest buildings along the LPA route, especially the 1876 St. Vibiana Cathedral and the 1910 Higgins Buildings. As Metro's Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the California State Historic Preservation Officer (Appendix R-3) only applies to National Register-eligible resources, we recommend including the building protection measures of the MOA as additional mitigation measures in the Final EIR to apply to resources eligible for the California Register as well, such as the Higgins Building. In particular, the commitment from Metro to repair damages that occur during construction, as alluded to in the MOA, in a manner consistent with the *Standards* should be explicated stated in the Final EIR.

7

<sup>2</sup> "A large historical structure, once demolished, normally cannot be adequately replaced by reports and commemorative markers." *League for Protection of Oakland's Architectural and Historic Resources v. City of Oakland* (1997) 52 Cal.App.4th 896, 909.

<sup>3</sup> For complete list of the twelve locations, please see Supplement EA/Recirculated Draft EIR, p.4.12.36-38.

### III. Los Angeles Zanja System

Although Section 4.12.2 Archeological Resource is not among the portions of the Draft EIR/EIR recirculated through the Supplemental EA/Recirc DEIR, it appears the route of the Locally Preferred Alternative potentially limits impacts to the Los Angeles zanja system to the segments that cross the LPA along First and Second Streets. The zanja system in Los Angeles was an extensive and integrated water conveyance network that served large areas of the city for many generations. Soon after founding of El Pueblo de la Reina de los Angeles in September 1781, the residents began construction of an extensive water management system to bring water from the Los Angeles River to the pueblo. This Zanja Madre, or mother ditch, in turn fed numerous smaller zanjias as the city grew and expanded. Over the decades, the zanja system supplied water for agriculture and ranching, as well as for domestic purposes, and was variously improved, covered, and piped until it fell out of use in the early 1900s. The Conservancy was actively involved with preservation efforts surrounding the 75-foot section of the Zanja Madre uncovered in the Los Angeles State Historic Park, also known as the Cornfields, in 2005 as part of the Gold Line construction.

According to the archeological technical report in the Regional Connector Draft EIS/EIR, many branches of the zanja likely remain within the project area. We look forward to the proactive and system-wide identification, documentation, and evaluation of the zanja system proposed as part of the mitigation measures in the Draft EIS/EIR. This will facilitate a better understanding of the current-day location of the various zanja branches, as well as ways to avoid adverse impacts from the construction of the Regional Connector. We also look forward to working with Metro and the project archeologists performing the onsite construction monitoring on appropriate preservation measures should segments of the zanja system be discovered as part of the proposed project.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Regional Connector Transit Corridor Project Supplemental Environmental Assessment/Recirculated Draft EIR. Please feel free to contact me at (213) 430-4203 or [afine@laconservancy.org](mailto:afine@laconservancy.org) or Flora Chou at [fchou@laconservancy.org](mailto:fchou@laconservancy.org) should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Adrian Scott Fine  
Director of Advocacy

cc: Edgar Garcia, Office of Historic Resources, City of Los Angeles  
Councilmember Jan Perry, Council District 9  
Jessica Wethington McLean, Bringing Back Broadway, Council District 14  
Chris Aihara and Mike Okamoto, Little Tokyo Community Council  
Bill Watanabe, Little Tokyo Service Center

## Attachment A

### Modern Theatre, Boston

The Modern Theatre was built in 1876 to house two storefronts and furniture and carpet showrooms and storage. It was renovated in 1913 to accommodate a movie house, the first one in Boston, and did not originally contain a stage. From that point on, the building has been used for a variety of entertainment purposes, and as a performing arts center. The last attempt to restore the building was made in the late 1970's. The building has been vacant since the early 1980's and was in a state of severe neglect and disrepair.



Owner Suffolk University restored and reconstructed the grand building façade in 2010 as part of a \$41 million development project that includes a new 185-seat theater and university housing in a 10-story residence hall built in a setback above the theater. One façade of the 10-story section



displays names and dates in recognition of the rich history of the site and neighborhood.

While retaining only the façade of a building does not meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, and is not the ideal preservation solution, the approach at the Modern is an example of a creative way to recognize the complex and layered history of its site.

## R-CN4

## Responses to Comments from the Los Angeles Conservancy, Fine, Adrian Scott

**Response to Comment R-CN4-1**

Thank you for the information about the Los Angeles Conservancy. Responses to the Conservancy's previously submitted comments are provided in Volume F-2 of this Final EIS/EIR, numbered CN14-1 through CN14-5. Metro examined a full range of the potential build alternatives in the Alternatives Analysis Report completed in February 2009. The most feasible alternatives were carried forward into the Draft EIS/EIR, including the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative, which would avoid the S. Kamada Restaurant, Atomic Café, Señor Fish, and Coast Imports building. However, this alternative would require the use of NRHP eligible historic resources, which is prohibited under Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966 when feasible and prudent avoidance alternatives, such as the Locally Preferred Alternative, exist. In consultation with the LA Conservancy, City of Los Angeles, and other stakeholders Metro has included additional mitigation measures, as shown in Section 4.12.1 of the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections, and Section 4.12.1.4.2 of this Final EIS/EIR, to address impacts to the building, including offering the building to any party willing to relocate it at their own expense, incorporating materials from the building into the station facilities, and providing an exhibit about the building to a local museum. These mitigation measures have been incorporated into Section 4.12.1.4.2 and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (Chapter 8) of this Final EIS/EIR.

It should be noted that the historical uses of the building, such as the Atomic Café, have long been gone. The building now houses a Mexican restaurant that is unrelated to the historical uses. The architectural features of the building have been substantially altered, and offer little semblance of the historical uses. The fact that those former uses have an association with events linked to community history, which is the primary basis for why the building is considered historically significant, is best preserved through the recommended mitigation measures. The proposed mitigation measures would address the criteria that render the building historically significant because they would incorporate and enhance the story of the building's historic use into a museum exhibit and place interpretive materials on-site.

**Response to Comment R-CN4-2**

The Metro Board of Directors designated the Fully Underground LRT Alternative as the Locally Preferred Alternative on October 28, 2010. The Locally Preferred Alternative would require acquisition of the S. Kamada Restaurant, Atomic Café, Señor Fish, and Coast Imports building property, as analyzed in Section 4.12.1.3.5.2 of the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections. The CEQA impacts analysis is also provided in that section. As discussed in Section 4.12.1.3.5.2 of this Final EIS/EIR, implementation of the mitigation measures identified in Section 4.12.1.4.2 and the Mitigation and Monitoring Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8) of this Final EIS/EIR would reduce impacts to the S. Kamada Restaurant, Atomic Café, Señor Fish, and Coast Imports building property to not adverse under NEPA and less than significant under CEQA. Thank you for the information about the building. Additional information about the building is provided in the cultural resources inventory in Appendix X, Cultural Resources - Built Environment, of the Draft EIS/EIR and Appendix X, Cultural Resources - Built Environment (Updated), of this Final EIS/EIR.

As noted on the survey form, the building was determined to be eligible for the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) under Criterion 1, but the structure has been significantly altered subsequent to its period of significance of 1965-1989. The historic signage present during the period of significance has been removed, the original windows have been removed and replaced, a corner entranceway has been filled in, and a side wall has been covered with a coating of gunnite. Nonetheless, the building was still determined to be eligible for the CRHR under Criterion 1.

#### Response to Comment R-CN4-3

Metro will continue to work with the Los Angeles Conservancy and other project stakeholders to ensure the implementation of the mitigation measures as they are currently proposed for the S. Kamada Restaurant, Atomic Café, Señor Fish, and Coast Imports building. As previously noted, Metro has explored a full range of feasible mitigation measures and alternatives to building removal. The mitigation measures (identified in Section 4.12.1.4.2 and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (Chapter 8) of this Final EIS/EIR), when taken as a whole, provide all feasible mitigation and would reduce impacts to not adverse under NEPA and a less than significant level under CEQA. This includes offering the building for a price of one dollar to any party willing to move it off of the station site, incorporating materials from the building into project facilities, or keeping portions of the building intact for use in the 1<sup>st</sup>/Central Avenue station, as well as providing Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER) recordation (for use during any potential relocation or for a permanent record of the building), and develop an exhibit commemorating the building at the Japanese American National Museum, the 1<sup>st</sup>/Central Avenue station site, or other suitable location.

#### Response to Comment R-CN4-4

Thank you for the suggestions provided in regards to developing creative design options for the 1<sup>st</sup>/Central Avenue Station and the potential integration of the Atomic Café into the new facility. Given the need to connect the Regional Connector alignment beneath 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to the proposed underground rail junction beneath 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets, it will not be possible to retain the S. Kamada Restaurant, Atomic Café, Señor Fish, and Coast Imports building in place. The necessity for a subsurface station at this location would preclude the ability to maintain the building (in its entirety) at its current location due to the construction methods and access needed to safely implement the Locally Preferred Alternative. Metro has included mitigation measures, as shown in Section 4.12.1 of the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections and Section 4.12.1.4.2 of this Final EIS/EIR, to address impacts to the building.

It should be noted that many of the options laid out in the commenter's suggestions will be explored by implementing the mitigation measures as they are currently proposed in Section 4.12.1 of the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections and this Final EIS/EIR. Metro will continue to work with the Los Angeles Conservancy and other project stakeholders to ensure that every effort is made to implement the mitigation measures.

#### Response to Comment R-CN4-5

Metro will work closely with the Los Angeles Conservancy and other project stakeholders to implement the mitigation measures for the S. Kamada Restaurant, Atomic Café, Señor Fish, and Coast Imports building.

**Response to Comment R-CN4-6**

Thank you for the information about the Modern Theater in Boston. The Draft EIS/EIR did include alternatives that avoided impacts to the S. Kamada Restaurant, Atomic Café, Señor Fish, and Coast Imports building property. However, the Locally Preferred Alternative identified in this Final EIS/EIR would require the acquisition of the S. Kamada Restaurant, Atomic Café, Señor Fish, and Coast Imports building property. The S. Kamada Restaurant, Atomic Café, Señor Fish, and Coast Imports building has been significantly altered from its original condition and does not meet the criteria for architectural historic significance (Criterion 3) or association with persons significant to our past (Criterion 2). However, this location played an important role in the broad patterns of California history as the commenter points out. Metro agrees that mitigation is required for the change to the property. Metro also agrees that additional mitigation measures are warranted to mitigate for the impacts to this historic resource and that the proposed additional mitigation, while not required to reach the CEQA determination in the Draft EIS/EIR, would reinforce that determination. Metro has developed additional mitigation measures to enhance reduction of the impacts to not adverse under NEPA and a less than significant level under CEQA and to be responsive to these comments. These include Metro offering the building for a period of one year following certification of this Final EIS/EIR for the price of one dollar to any party willing to move the building off of the 1<sup>st</sup>/Central Avenue station site at their own expense. Should no parties come forward, Metro would incorporate materials from the building into the project facilities. Metro would also offer to provide an exhibit commemorating the Atomic Café at the Japanese American National Museum or other suitable location, including exploring incorporating such an exhibit into the proposed 1<sup>st</sup>/Central Avenue station; and developing an individual HABS/HAER submission. Section 4.12, Historic Resources, of this Final EIS/EIR and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8) have been updated accordingly with the new mitigation measures.

**Response to Comment R-CN4-7**

The St. Vibiana Cathedral, the Higgins Building, and other historic resources along the proposed Locally Preferred Alternative alignment are analyzed in Section 4.12.1 of the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections and this Final EIS/EIR. Building protection measures are included for resources not eligible for the NRHP in Section 4.12.1.4 of the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections. These mitigation measures have been incorporated into Section 4.12.1.4.2 and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (Chapter 8) of this Final EIS/EIR. No damage to historic structures is anticipated. However, Metro would repair any damage caused by construction by restoring the building to its pre-construction survey condition, as discussed in Section 4.7.3.5.1 of the Draft EIS/EIR, Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections, and this Final EIS/EIR. This mitigation measure was included in Section 4.7.4.1 of the Draft EIS/EIR and Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections, Section 4.7.4.2.1 of this Final EIS/EIR, and is included as mitigation measure number NV-1 of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (Chapter 8 of this Final EIS/EIR).

**Response to Comment R-CN4-8**

Comment acknowledged. Metro looks forward to working with the Los Angeles Conservancy as the mitigation measures are implemented for the Los Angeles Zanja System as noted in Section 4.12.2.4.2 of the Draft EIS/EIR and this Final EIS/EIR (CR/A-6).

Responses to Public Comment Letters

Comment Letter	Affiliation	Last Name	First Name
R-PC1		Kasperavicius	Alexis
R-PC2		Tooley	Eric
R-PC3		Norton	Jim
R-PC4		Dillard	Joyce
R-PC5		Kay	Gregory
R-PC6		Braunstein	Alex
R-PC7		Johnston	Mark R.
R-PC8		Frevele	Dave

From: Alexis Kasperavicius [mailto:ak@kaspex.com]  
Sent: Monday, July 18, 2011 11:11 AM  
To: Regional Connector  
Subject: Question Regarding Car Storage For R/C

Dear Regional Connector Team,

I could really use your help in figuring something out. In looking over the map for the R/C something seems apparent that doesn't seem to have been considered:

The new tunnel for the Regional Connector project will intersect the isolated portion of the old Pacific Electric "Hollywood Subway" tunnel. It is large enough to be used as a storage area for trains. Holding at least two, but potentially as many as eight or more three car trains.

The land could be had cheaply, is almost a mile long, was built for this purpose and is wide enough for two tracks which split out to *four* platforms. It could also be accessed from the subway terminal building by operators starting or leaving shifts.

Do you know if anyone had considered this option? It seems like money laying on the table.

1

Thanks much for your time!

P.S. You can see a picture of the inside of the tunnel here (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/7294653@N07/2816704344/>)



## R-PC1

## Responses to Comments from Kasperavicius, Alexis

**Response to Comment R-PC1-1**

The abandoned Pacific Electric (Belmont) tunnel crosses the proposed Locally Preferred Alternative alignment near 4<sup>th</sup> and Flower Streets, and was partially demolished in this location during construction of the Bonaventure Hotel. Due to the depth of the proposed Regional Connector tunnel, which is confined by engineering and utility constraints, an additional section of the Pacific Electric tunnel would need to be removed during construction as indicated in Section 4.12.1 of the Draft EIS/EIR and the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections and this Final EIS/EIR. The Regional Connector tracks would not be level with the Pacific Electric tunnel in this location, making a connection difficult. The Subway Terminal Building is privately-owned, and it is Metro's goal to minimize the use of private property as requested by comments received during scoping and the Draft EIS/EIR review period. Therefore, Metro is not pursuing a connection to the Pacific Electric tunnel as part of the Regional Connector project.

From: Eric Tooley [mailto:eric@erictooleydesign.com]  
Sent: Saturday, August 13, 2011 6:27 PM  
To: Regional Connector  
Subject: EIS/EIR

Hellow,

I am writing as a stackholder to tell you that I support he Regional Connector as layed out in the Final EIS/EIR 100%. This is the most important rail line for the future of Los Angeles, connecting the Gold, Blue and future Expo Line seamlessly through 7th/Metro. I use tat station often and look forward to the completion of the connector. I hope that the US Goverment decides to fund this project and I am happy that the work has been done so completely on this to this point. 1

While it would be nice to have a station in Buner Hill and FInancial District, I support the line without it as well.

Thank you

Eric Tooley

1741 Maltman Ave.  
Los Angeles CA 90026

R-PC2

## R-PC2

### Responses to Comments from Tooley, Eric

#### Response to Comment R-PC2-1

Thank you for your comment. Support for the project with or without stations in the Bunker Hill and Financial District areas is noted.

From: PalmTown111@aol.com [mailto:PalmTown111@aol.com]  
Sent: Sunday, August 14, 2011 11:38 AM  
To: Regional Connector  
Subject: Regional Connector

Dear Ms. Roybal Saltarelli,

First of all, the route chosen for the regional connector, as well as the decision to go underground, makes perfectly good sense--no surface route would have worked from either a speed or capacity standpoint. ] 1

What I do find troubling--and I realize this is not a new concern--is lack of a station at the heart of the financial district: 4th/5th and Flower. My chief concern is not a lessening of convenience for office workers in that vicinity: walking a couple of extra blocks would do us all good. Crowding at the 7th/Metro platforms is the real concern. Already those platforms can be uncomfortably crowded at rush hours, and adding the Expo Line traffic will only intensify the problem. ] 2

If monetary considerations won't allow for a Financial District station during initial construction, it would be extremely shortsighted not to construct the line in such a way that a station can be added in the future--it will surely be needed.

2  
cont'd

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and good luck as you move ahead with the excellent plan for a regional connector that promises to tie the entire light-rail system together in a rational way.

3

Jim Norton

## R-PC3

### Responses to Comments from Norton, Jim

#### Response to Comment R-PC3-1

Comment noted. The Locally Preferred Alternative alignment would be underground.

#### Response to Comment R-PC3-2

Due to a need to reduce project cost, the Locally Preferred Alternative designated by the Metro Board of Directors on October 28, 2010 does not include a station at 5<sup>th</sup> and Flower Streets. However, the Locally Preferred Alternative would be designed so as not to preclude a station from being added at this location as a separate future project. Ridership at 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station will be affected by a number of new developments in the area. As shown in Section 4.19.2.3 of this Final EIS/EIR, the separate Flower Street Fire/Life/Safety Project would address Fire/Life/Safety concerns at 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station. However the Regional Connector project is a separate project that, by itself, would not result in crowding at unsafe levels regardless of whether a station is built at 5<sup>th</sup> and Flower Streets.

#### Response to Comment R-PC3-3

Thank you for your comment.

**From:** Joyce Dillard <[dillardjoyce@yahoo.com](mailto:dillardjoyce@yahoo.com)>  
**Date:** September 6, 2011 4:41:32 PM PDT  
**To:** Ray Tellis <[ray.tellis@dot.gov](mailto:ray.tellis@dot.gov)>, "Roybal, Dolores" <[ROYBALD@metro.net](mailto:ROYBALD@metro.net)>  
**Subject: Comments to Metro Regional Connector Recirculation Draft EIR/EIS due 9.6.2011**  
**Reply-To:** Joyce Dillard <[dillardjoyce@yahoo.com](mailto:dillardjoyce@yahoo.com)>

Comments to Metro Regional Connector Recirculation Draft EIR/EIS due 9.6.2011

Methane and mitigation standards and a Methane Prevention Detection and Monitoring Program (with the National Fire Protection Association standards) need to be taken into account as well as the City of Los Angeles Methane Task Force. ] 1

The Methane Task Force does not seem to meet and therefore may be inconsequential to mitigation of methane. An alternative needs to be decided. ] 2

Subsidence matters need to be taken into consideration. ] 3

Earthquake faults were not mentioned in this recirculation or mitigation factors. ] 4

Mangrove Estates property was a former oil field. This and any other site should be recognized for safety factors. ] 5

Methane migration would change any projected usage in the Greenhouse Gas Emissions. ] 6

The use of overweight trucks was not mentioned, nor any sewer breakage by their use. Who will be responsible, the private property owner? ] 7

No mention of stormwater projects including City of Los Angeles Proposition O projects or any State watershed projects including but not limited to State grants was not mentioned and its effect. ] 8

Water supply issues were not addressed and there appears to be no Water Supply Assessment. There lacks any mention of restroom placement and drinking water. ] 9

Noise and vibration was not measured during time of days of usage such as the Disney Center concert schedule. ] 10

What scientific data will be collected, who will analyze that data and who will report that data. ] 11

Who is responsible for any liability and with what securitization? ] 12

Joyce Dillard  
P.O. Box 31377  
Los Angeles, CA 90031

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**R-PC4****Responses to Comments from Dillard, Joyce****Response to Comment R-PC4-1**

Analysis of the potential to encounter methane in the project area was analyzed in Section 4.9.3.5.2 of the Draft EIS/EIR and this Final EIS/EIR, and mitigation measures were proposed in Section 4.9.4. These mitigation measures have been incorporated into Section 4.9.4.2 and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8) of this Final EIS/EIR. The Regional Connector project would be consistent with the City of Los Angeles Methane Mitigation Standards. Also, all project structures within methane zones and buffer zones would be consistent with municipal code requirements for gas concentration/pressure testing on a specified frequency and, based on the results, appropriate mitigation measures or controls to be included in the design. These measures would include the use of gas-impermeable liners and venting to reduce or eliminate gas intrusion into stations and along the length of the underground segments as needed to ensure consistency. Mitigation ensuring compliance with all applicable fire and methane standards and regulations is included as mitigation measure numbers SS-1 through SS-5 in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8 of this Final EIS/EIR).

**Response to Comment R-PC4-2**

Adequate analysis and mitigation of methane was performed and included in the Draft EIS/EIR, as described in Response to Comment R-PC4-1 above. Metro would implement the mitigation measures identified in Sections 4.9.4.2 and 4.15.4.2 and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8) of this Final EIS/EIR to ensure no adverse/significant methane risks occur, irrespective of Methane Task Force meetings.

**Response to Comment R-PC4-3**

Impacts associated with subsidence have been analyzed in Section 4.9, Geotechnical/Subsurface/Seismic/Hazardous Materials, of the Draft EIS/EIR and this Final EIS/EIR. As indicated in Section 4.9, the proposed tunneling would have the potential for adverse impacts related to ground settlement and differential settlement immediately above the alignment as well as adjacent to structures including the historical buildings. Mitigation measures were identified in the Draft EIS/EIR and have been refined in this Final EIS/EIR, which would reduce impacts associated with potential ground settlement to not adverse under NEPA and less than significant under CEQA.

**Response to Comment R-PC4-4**

Earthquake faults were discussed in Section 4.9.2.2 of the Draft EIS/EIR and this Final EIS/EIR. As indicated in the section, the project area is not located within a currently established Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault zone for surface fault rupture. A detailed inventory of regional fault zones is available in Appendix U, Geotechnical/Subsurface/Seismic/Hazardous Materials Technical Memorandum.

**Response to Comment R-PC4-5**

The Union Station Oil Field along Los Angeles and Temple Streets has been delineated as a Methane Zone by the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering. The area of the Union Oil Methane Zone, which includes the Mangrove property, is illustrated in Figure 4.9-3 of the Draft EIS/EIR and this Final EIS/EIR. Hazardous impacts associated with this methane zone have been discussed in Section 4.9, Geotechnical/Subsurface/Seismic/Hazardous Materials, of the Draft EIS/EIR and this Final EIS/EIR.

**Response to Comment R-PC4-6**

The comment is unclear. Hazardous impacts associated with methane zones and methane buffer zones have been discussed in Section 4.9, Geotechnical/Subsurface/Seismic/Hazardous Materials, of the Draft EIS/EIR and this Final EIS/EIR. Greenhouse gas emissions were discussed in Section 4.6, Climate Change, of the Draft EIS/EIR and this Final EIS/EIR.

**Response to Comment R-PC4-7**

The potential for haul trucks to physically damage roadways was discussed in Chapter 3, Transportation Impacts and Mitigation, of the Draft and Final EIS/EIR. Mitigation was incorporated which required that roadways be restored to pre-construction condition if damaged by project-related traffic (see mitigation measure number TR-2 in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8 of this Final EIS/EIR)). The construction contractor would be responsible for repairing roadways damaged due to project-related traffic during construction. The weight of loaded haul trucks would not be heavy enough to damage sewer lines.

**Response to Comment R-PC4-8**

No City of Los Angeles Proposition O or state watershed projects are located in the Regional Connector project area. As indicated in Section 4.10, Water Resources, of the Draft EIS/EIR and this Final EIS/EIR, the Regional Connector would have no adverse effects and no significant impacts on drainage or hydrology.

**Response to Comment R-PC4-9**

No public restrooms or drinking fountains would be provided as part of this project. Restrooms for Metro staff would be located at each station. The water supply required for private restroom facilities and fire flow needs would be minimal and adequate water supply would be available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, and no new water facilities or the expansion of existing facilities would be required. The Regional Connector project does not meet the definition of a "project" requiring of preparation of a Water Supply Assessment.

**Response to Comment R-PC4-10**

In order to obtain conservative ambient noise measurements, noise monitoring was conducted when Walt Disney Concert Hall facilities were not in use, which resulted in lower ambient noise levels. In addition, noise monitoring was conducted to minimize disruption with operations and activities at the Walt Disney Concert Hall.

## Response to Comment R-PC4-11

The scientific data that was collected as part of this environmental analysis is presented in Volumes F-1, F-5, and F-6 of this Final EIS/EIR. Refer to Appendix C, List of Preparers (Updated), of this Final EIS/EIR for the list of staff who prepared the Draft EIS/EIR, Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections, and this Final EIS/EIR.

## Response to Comment R-PC4-12

It is unclear what liability the commenter is referring to. Liability varies depending on the circumstance. The EIS/EIR has been prepared in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act regulations and California Environmental Quality Act guidelines. Federal Transit Administration is the lead agency under NEPA and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is the lead agency under CEQA.

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From: Wufoo [mailto:no-reply@wufoo.com]  
Sent: Thursday, September 01, 2011 11:16 PM  
To: Roybal, Dolores  
Subject: Feedback - Regional Connector Transit Corridor [#26]

<b>Name *</b>	Gregory Kay
<b>Email (you@email.com) *</b>	<a href="mailto:Gregoryekay@gmail.com">Gregoryekay@gmail.com</a>
<b>Phone Number</b>	(323) 663-5900
<b>Select a Subject *</b>	I have a suggestion

**Comment \***

I have a comment on the Supplemental Environmental Assessment/Recirculated Sections of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections) presenting information on the refinements to the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the Regional Connector.

I have one primary concern regarding the Regional Connector project, and it is about the proposed station at 1st and Alameda. It is my understanding that in order to build this station, three historic structures – and the successful businesses they house – must be razed. The businesses are Señor Fish, Weiland's Brewery, and The Spice Table. 1st st in Little Tokyo is one of the very few historic streets in Los Angeles that has kept the majority of its buildings

1

intact – this continuity has contributed to a well-frequented pedestrian friendly streetscape.

I would like to encourage the Regional Connector planners to carefully consider how the proposed station will impact the intersection, particularly in regards to scale. The sense of place is already present. A station area consisting of oversized sculptural gestures in a vast plaza would be a step backwards. Perhaps at least the historic facade of the Señor Fish building could be preserved, in a similar manner as was done for facades on Vine Street, Hollywood when the massive "W" Hotel project was constructed.

From an urban planning perspective, it is unfortunate that the original plan – to replace the Office Depota property with the station – was found to be unsuitable. The Office Depot and its parking lot are at a suburban scale, and very out of character with the neighborhood. The focal point that a station would have contributed to that part of the neighborhood could have helped to tie together the gateways to the Artist District and Little Tokyo.

1  
cont'd

## R-PC5

## Responses to Comments from Kay, Gregory

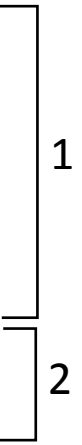
## Response to Comment R-PC5-1

Of the three structures mentioned, only the S. Kamada Restaurant, Atomic Café, Señor Fish, and Coast Imports building is eligible for the California Register of Historic Resources, and none are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Metro understands the value of these buildings, and the importance of small businesses to the Little Tokyo community. It is Metro's goal to minimize the number of business acquisitions needed for the project. Refinements made to the Locally Preferred Alternative since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR have reduced the number of businesses displaced on the block bounded by 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Alameda Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, and Central Avenue, as shown in Table 4.2-5 and Appendix R-1, Locally Preferred Alternative Drawings, of the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections and Table 4.2-5 and Appendix 1, Locally Preferred Alternative Drawings, of this Final EIS/EIR. No historic resources in the Little Tokyo Historic District would be affected. In mitigation measure number CN-8 in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8 of this Final EIS/EIR), Metro indicates that the design of the 1<sup>st</sup>/Central Avenue station would enhance pedestrian circulation, thus contributing to the pedestrian-friendliness of the streetscape. A visual and aesthetic analysis of the Locally Preferred Alternative was performed and documented in Section 4.4.3.5 of the Draft EIS/EIR and this Final EIS/EIR. Station design features would be developed in conjunction with the community. As indicated in Section 4.12.1 of the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections and mitigation measure number CR/B-5 in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Locally Preferred Alternative (Chapter 8 of this Final EIS/EIR), would be offered for a period of one year following certification of this Final EIS/EIR for the price of one dollar to any party willing to move it off of the 1<sup>st</sup>/Central Avenue station site at their own expense. Should no parties come forward, Metro would incorporate materials from the building into the project facilities. Metro would explore keeping portions of the building intact for use in the 1<sup>st</sup>/Central Avenue station. The 1<sup>st</sup>/Central Avenue station would be adjacent to the Office Depot store, and would still be able to function as a focal point for both Little Tokyo and the Arts District.

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From: Alex Braunstein [mailto:legandaryedition@gmail.com]  
Sent: Friday, September 02, 2011 5:05 PM  
To: Regional Connector  
Subject:

I have read most of the EIR for the regional connector. It looks, for the most part, like a good system, with a few exceptions. The most glaring is the odd placement of portals. There are times when there are three portals places on the same side of the same block. Three portals are good, but when they are adjacent to each other, they are pointless. Instead, I would like suggest placing them across the street from each other, as the portals are in cities such as New York, London, and Paris. Besides that, there is not much more to say. It looks like a good extension, especially the part about grade-separating the Gold Line.



## R-PC6

### Responses to Comments from Braunstein, Alex

#### Response to Comment R-PC6-1

It appears that the term “portals” refers to station entrances in this comment. Not all station entrances shown in Appendix R-1, Locally Preferred Alternative Drawings, of the Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections would ultimately be built, as discussed in Section 2.3.6.2 of this Final EIS/EIR. Entrance locations would be confirmed during final design. Preference for having entrances across the street from each other is noted.

#### Response to Comment R-PC6-2

Support for the project and grade separation of the Metro Gold Line is noted.

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From: Mark Johnston [mailto:canammj@yahoo.com]  
Sent: Wednesday, September 07, 2011 9:40 AM  
To: Regional Connector  
Subject: Supplemental EA/Recirculated Draft EIR Sections Available for Public Review

I am still disappointed that there is no discussion or comments about connections to any lines heading south from Union Station/Alameda street area. These could be to the Blue Line, the Harbor Sub to LAX and the Santa Ana Branch corridor- a line that will desperately need a connection to Union Station/Downtown to be a success. Still feel you need a knock out panel near Central to allow a future line to the south.

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This is a typical problem with METRO have individual teams doing individual lines, no one talks or communicates about connections or junctions with the other proposed lines. Good example is having to redo 1st/Alameda from the East LA just to make the downtown connector work.

other than the deleted station in the financial district, the rest of the project being underground and spacing of the stations is good.

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thank you  
Mark R. Johnston  
4185 Van Buren St

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**R-PC7****Responses to Comments from Johnston, Mark R.****Response to Comment R-PC7-1**

Connections southward along Alameda Street toward the Metro Blue Line, Harbor Subdivision, or the Santa Ana Branch corridor are outside the scope of this project, and would not meet the purpose and need goal of minimizing trip times between the Metro Gold, Blue, and Expo Lines at Union Station and 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station as stated in Section 1.2.2 of the Draft EIS/EIR and this Final EIS/EIR. The Harbor Subdivision Alternatives Analysis Report prepared in 2009 examined the possibility of an Alameda Street alignment. Metro ensures coordination and consistency between its corridor projects. The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative and Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would have preserved the existing Little Tokyo/Arts District station and much of the surface trackwork around the 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets intersection. However, the Metro Board of Directors designated the Fully Underground LRT Alternative as the Locally Preferred Alternative on October 28, 2010 because it would result in fewer impacts to the Little Tokyo community than the other build alternatives and it would successfully serve the project purpose and need.

**Response to Comment R-PC7-2**

Opposition to the deletion of the Flower/5<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Street station is noted. The Locally Preferred Alternative would be constructed in a way that does not preclude addition of a Flower/5<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Street station at a later time as a separate future project. Support for the spacing between station and the underground alignment is noted.

September 2, 2011

Dolores Roybal Saltarelli, AICP, Project Manager  
 One Gateway Plaza, MS 99-22-2  
 Los Angeles, CA, 90012

Dear Ms. Roybal Saltarelli,

This is a comment for the Supplemental Environmental Assessment/Recirculated Sections of the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Regional Connector Transit Corridor Study. During the over-half century that I've lived my whole life here in Los Angeles, I haven't simply been a deeply intent fan of railroads in southern California, I've done thousands of hours of research and on site investigation. I'm the Huntington Library manuscript volunteer who works on railroad maps. I'm one of the rapidly disappearing few who made sure to ride local rail transit before its final fragments were totally erased county-wide on March 31, 1963. Few people have the knowledge in local railroads that I have. Because of extensive, long time interest, the proposed Regional Connector strikes me as one of the most badly needed projects that have ever been proposed.

The key message here is mandate that Measure R sent on November 2008. Ballot initiatives almost never pass with two thirds vote. Measure R did. Though figures vary, whether 2,039,214 votes (67.93%), or 67.22%, or other precise total is used, it's still clear that passage of Measure R was a truly rare event, a pointed and emphatic message that the majority of us need and want require relief from the increasing transportation gridlock we suffer. That's how deep our dissatisfaction is with our transit system, how much more we want it expanded and improved. It would be tough to claim that either the Westside Subway extension of the Purple Line or the Regional Connector trumps the other in being beneficial or overdue, that's a difficult choice. But we reject further single passenger automobile solutions that have gotten us in such a widespread predicament. Because of the signal value of the Regional Connector, I hope the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Reports are approved and construction expedited as soon as possible, we need it.

Unfortunately and even at this advanced date, the Regional Connector doesn't get the share of attention it deserves. Though the Regional Connector project some powerful people who advocate it, California Senator Barbara Boxer and Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa not being the least, I have to stress that insufficient attention is focused on the value and necessity of Connector, how it removes the critical gap that's prompted it, how it would take what is currently somewhat a patchwork of transit in one of the greatest cities on the planet and make that transit system far more useful.

This greatly refined Regional Connector is truly superb now, with its elegant alignment that now tunnels under Japanese Village Plaza. Besides simply

being "done right" it will make an overdue and welcome change to thousands of us, not only in saving time and making a daily impact in quality of life to those who need to use it but in the resulting gridlock it will relieve from the rest of us. This project has had some of the most demanding changes and stresses locally that such projects ever suffer. No small amount of work has been done by the Connector staff to be hospitable and compliant with the wishes of the historic, valued Little Tokyo community that was concerned about the damage to them from at-grade crossings. The Little Tokyo Community Council understandably gave approval to the the good work doen revising the project, particularly the changed alignment under Japanese Village, proceeding with the underground-only alternative, and use of the Mangrove property to markedly reduce the impact of construction on the tiny, fragile and beloved Little Tokyo in downtown Los Angeles. By having so many different factions nearly unaminously stress the need and desire for the Regional Connector, I hope that Metro responds to the voice and wishes of the people to make every effort to have it in operation as soon as safely and competently possible.

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cont'd

Sincerely,



Dave Frevele  
622 S. Wall St. #A337  
Los Angeles, CA 90014

## R-PC8

### Responses to Comments from Frevele, Dave

#### Response to Comment R-PC8-1

Thank you for your comment. Experience with railroads and support for the Regional Connector project is noted. Support for the Locally Preferred Alternative and refinements made since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR is noted. It is Metro's goal to complete the Regional Connector project in a safe and timely manner.