

REVISED AND RECIRCULATED NOTICE OF PREPARATION

TO: Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

FROM: Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro)
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attn: Dolores Roybal-Saltarelli, Mailstop 99-22-4

SUBJECT: Revised and Recirculated Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

PROJECT TITLE: Metro C Line (Green) Extension to Torrance Project

NOTE: A Notice of Preparation (NOP) was sent out for the Project on April 12, 2010, however the environmental process was suspended in 2012 due to funding shortfalls. The Project has now been resumed due to funding availability through the passage of the Ordinance known as the Los Angeles County Traffic Improvement Plan (Ballot Measure M), which was approved by voters in 2016. The purpose of this revised NOP for the Project is to inform the public of Metro's decision to carry forward into the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) the modified Alternative 1 (Metro Right-of-Way, with one station at the Redondo Beach Regional Transit Center and a second station at the Torrance Regional Transit Center) and Alternative 2 (Hawthorne Boulevard with a station at Hawthorne/ Artesia Boulevards/South Bay Galleria and a second station at the Torrance Regional Transit Center). This revised NOP also further explains the Project and the EIR process.

As the lead agency for the EIR, Metro will prepare a Draft EIR for the Project. Metro wants to know your views as to the scope and content of the environmental information and any information germane to its statutory responsibilities in connection with the Project. Responsible Agencies will need to use the environmental documentation prepared by Metro when considering permits or other approvals for the Project.

The Project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response should be sent at the earliest possible date, and no later than March 15, 2021.

Please send your response to Dolores Roybal Saltarelli, Project Manager at the address shown above. Agency responses must include the name of a contact person in your agency.

Date: 1/29/21

Signature Dolores Roybal Saltarelli
Title Deputy Executive Officer
Telephone 213-922-3024

REVISED AND RECIRCULATED NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

DATE: January 29, 2021

TO: AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS AND INTERESTED PARTIES

SUBJECT: REVISED AND RECIRCULATED NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP) OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

PROJECT TITLE: METRO C LINE (GREEN) EXTENSION TO TORRANCE PROJECT

FROM: LOS ANGELES COUNTY METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (METRO)

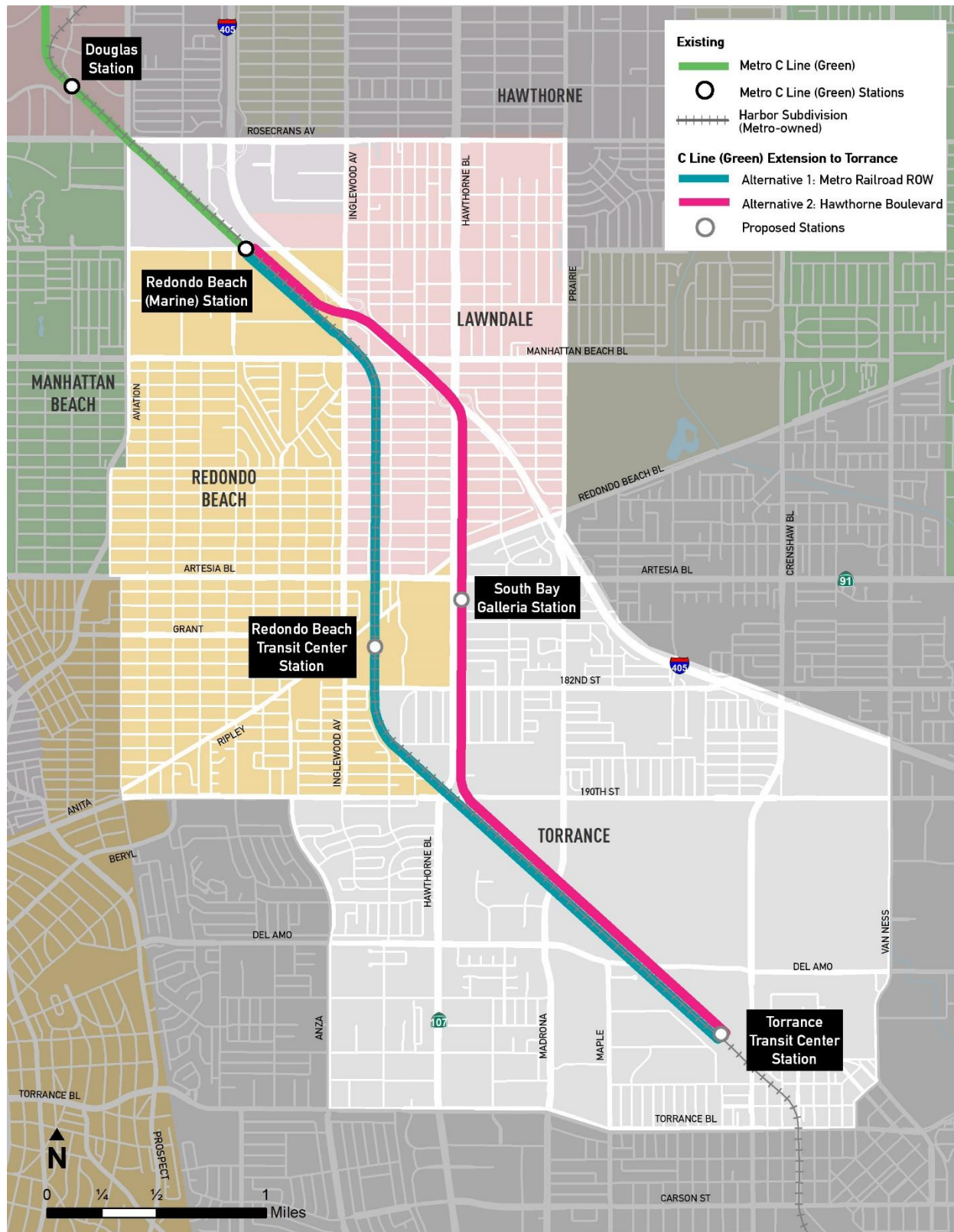
PROJECT LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING: The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) C Line (Green) Extension to Torrance Project (Project) is a proposed light rail transit (LRT) line that would extend approximately 4.5 miles from the end of the existing Metro C Line (Green) at the Redondo Beach (Marine) Station in Redondo Beach southeast towards Torrance. The proposed LRT line would connect the Metro system farther into the South Bay, serving the cities of Redondo Beach, Lawndale, and Torrance (Figure 1). The Project Area is primarily urbanized, with a wide range of existing and planned land uses.

PROJECT INITIATION: Metro has initiated a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the C Line (Green) Extension to Torrance Project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Metro is the lead agency for the Project. The Draft EIR will be prepared in accordance with Section 15170 of the CEQA Guidelines.

The purpose of this revised Notice of Preparation (NOP) is to notify interested agencies and parties, local jurisdictions, community organizations, and interested residents (collectively, interested parties) of the preparation of the Draft EIR for the Project. This revised NOP is to solicit comments as to the scope and content of the Draft EIR and potential environmental effects from the Project; invite public participation in the Draft EIR scoping process; and announce the public scoping meetings.

PROJECT BACKGROUND: Metro initially completed an Alternatives Analysis (AA) Study for this corridor in 2009, which studied transit alternatives along the Metro-owned Harbor Subdivision right-of-way (ROW) connecting downtown Los Angeles, Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. The AA identified the C Line (Green) Extension from Redondo Beach to Torrance, utilizing the Metro ROW in the Harbor Subdivision Corridor, as the preferred route alternative. LRT was identified as the preferred mode. On April 12, 2010, a NOP (the original NOP) was publicly released, informing interested parties of Metro's plans to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/EIR studying the potential environmental benefits and impacts of the alternatives that were prioritized in the AA and requesting input about the Project. Metro initiated analysis of No Build, Transportation Systems Management, and LRT Alternatives along the ROW. However, after failure of a proposed sales tax measure (Los Angeles County Ballot Measure J) in 2012, the Project was paused was for lack of an available funding plan.

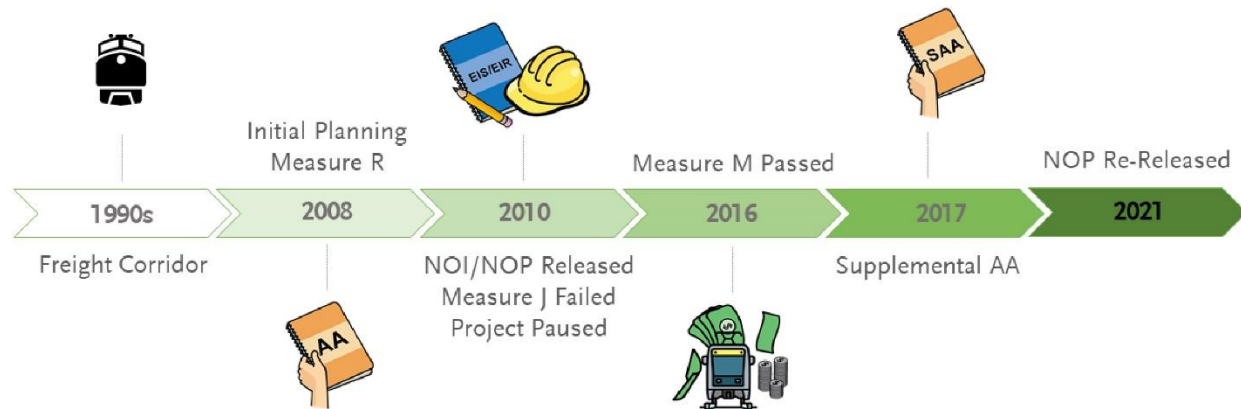
Figure 1. Project Area and Alternatives to be Studied in EIR



After the passage of Measure M in 2016, Metro reinitiated the Project in spring 2017 with preparation of a Supplemental AA (SAA). This SAA study focused on soliciting feedback from residents, business owners, elected officials, stakeholder organizations, and others to refine and update alternatives previously identified in the AA Study. The SAA also allowed Metro to update existing conditions of the Project Area, which had changed since the earlier analysis began in 2010.

Refer to Figure 2 for a visualization of the timeline of the corridor and the studies described above.

Figure 2. Corridor and Project Studies Timeline



Throughout 2017, the Metro project team used multiple iterations of feedback from interested parties to guide the evaluation of additional light rail alternatives for consideration. As a result, the Metro project team proposed various alignment and design options between the existing Redondo Beach (Marine) C Line (Green) Station and the Torrance Transit Center. Based on that iterative outreach process and further technical analysis, four Build Alternatives were prepared for analysis in the SAA.

Based on the technical evaluation in the SAA and input from interested parties, staff recommended the following two alternatives to be carried forward into the Draft EIR for further analysis and refinement to the Metro Planning and Programming Committee on September 19, 2018 (Refer to Figure 1):

- **Alternative 1: Metro ROW and overcrossing, without a station at Manhattan/Inglewood (City of Lawndale).** Alternative 1 would follow the existing Metro ROW for the length of the Project. When crossing Inglewood Avenue and Manhattan Beach Boulevard, this alternative would be in a grade-separated configuration. Alternative 1 is most similar to the Light Rail Alternative evaluated in the 2009 AA. Two stations are proposed: Redondo Beach Transit Center and Torrance Transit Center.
- **Alternative 3: Hawthorne to 190th Street, without a station at Hawthorne/166th.** Alternative 3 would start within the existing Metro ROW and would leave the Metro ROW to parallel I-405 (San Diego Freeway) between Inglewood Avenue and Hawthorne Boulevard. The alignment would then travel along Hawthorne Boulevard between 162nd Street in Lawndale and 190th Street in Torrance before rejoining the Metro ROW. Two stations are proposed: South Bay Galleria and Torrance Transit Center.

The Metro Planning and Programming Committee approved the Supplemental Alternatives Analysis and these staff recommendations as described in the Board Report prepared for the September 19, 2018 meeting, which is available online or via the address provided in this NOP (<https://boardagendas.metro.net/board-report/2018-0317/>).

PROJECT GOALS: The Project will provide reliable transit service to meet the future mobility needs of residents, employees, and visitors who travel within the South Bay subregion. This extended transit service will increase mobility and connectivity for historically underserved, transit-dependent communities; improve travel times on local and regional transportation networks; and accommodate substantial future employment and population growth. Goals of the Project are:

- Goal 1: Provide Mobility Improvements
- Goal 2: Minimize Environmental Impacts
- Goal 3: Ensure Cost Feasibility and Financial Feasibility
- Goal 4: Support Local and Regional Land Use Plans and Policies
- Goal 5: Ensure Equity

PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED: The Project would operate along a 4.6-mile north-south corridor from the existing Redondo Beach (Marine) C Line (Green) Station to the under-construction Torrance Transit Center. The Project Area includes portions of the cities of Lawndale, Redondo Beach, Torrance, and Hawthorne. However, the Proposed Project itself would only be located in the cities of Lawndale, Redondo Beach, and Torrance.

A variety of land uses exist within the Project Area, including single- and multi-family residential neighborhoods, office, commercial and warehousing districts, and industrial areas including oil refineries.

The main purpose of the proposed improvements is to provide a reliable, high-frequency transit service and improve mobility in southwestern Los Angeles County by enhancing the regional transit network in the South Bay. Metro aims to provide more direct connections to regional destinations and between key transit hubs/routes; provide an alternative mode of transportation for commuters who currently use congested arterial roadways and freeways; improve transit accessibility and connectivity for residents of communities along the corridor; and encourage a mode shift to transit, reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Project proposes to develop two rail stations along the LRT line and identifies transit-oriented community land use concepts and first/last mile pedestrian/bicycle connectivity opportunities associated with the proposed stations. The Project will also include the development of ancillary facilities such as traction power substations and grade separation structures.

Stakeholder coordination, design refinement, and impact assessment of the Project are ongoing. As a result, there will continue to be Project design iteration. As such, it is anticipated that the Draft EIR document may include, but is not limited to, variations to station number and locations; options for vertical alignments; options for parking facilities; specific alignment refinements; ancillary improvements; and leveraged improvements in collaboration with Metro's local partners and betterments to address these issues. Therefore, interested parties are advised to stay informed and engaged with the numerous Project engagement and communication channels via the Project website below.

The Project is identified in Metro's 2020 Long Range Transportation Plan, as amended, and is one of the many transit projects funded by Measure R (November 2008) and Measure M (November 2016). The Project will also rely on other funding sources. Subsequent projects by Metro or other agencies may tier from this EIR.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: The purpose of the Draft EIR is to disclose the impacts of the Project on the environment. Key CEQA environmental factors to be addressed include:

- Transportation
- Land Use and Planning
- Population and Housing
- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Noise
- Biological Resources
- Geology / Soils
- Hazards / Hazardous Materials / Wildfire
- Hydrology / Water Quality
- Utilities / Services Systems
- Energy
- Cultural Resources
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Public Services / Recreation

Project design features and mitigation measures to reduce potentially significant impacts during construction and operation will be identified in the Draft EIR.

SCOPING MEETINGS: Virtual scoping meetings to accept both written and oral comments on the scope of the Draft EIR will be held on the following dates and times:

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| Scoping Meeting # 1 Wednesday, February 24, 2021 4:00 pm Join Online: Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86041198859 Phone: 646.558.8656 Code: 860 4119 8859 | Scoping Meeting # 2 Saturday, February 27, 2021 11:00 am Join Online: Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82839902680 Phone: 646.558.8656 Code: 828 3990 2680 |
|---|---|

In addition, the Scoping Meeting presentation will be recorded and posted on the Project website where it can be viewed at any time during the public comment period. Comments can be posted on the webpage or sent to Metro via e-mail and conventional mail delivery.

The scope of the Draft EIR, including the goals and objectives, Project Area, Project description, and the environmental impacts to be evaluated will be presented at the public scoping meetings. Spanish translation and speaking staff will be provided at all scoping meetings. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations and other translations are available by calling (323) 466-3876 or California Relay at 711 at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting.

For those unable to attend the meetings, a video recording of the formal presentation will be made available on the Project website within one week of the conclusion of the meeting series. For more Project information, please visit www.metro.net/clineext.

COMMENT DUE DATE: In addition to oral comments accepted at the scoping meetings, written comments on the scope of the Draft EIR, including the goals and objectives, Project Area and description, environmental impacts to be evaluated, and methodologies to be used in the evaluation, will be accepted. Metro does not anticipate extending the scoping comment period. Therefore, written comments should be sent to Metro on or before March 15, 2021, at the postal address or e-mail address below.

ADDRESS: Written and oral comments will be accepted at the public scoping meetings or they may be sent to Dolores Roybal Saltarelli, Project Manager, Metro, One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop: 99-22-4, Los Angeles, CA 90012, or via e-mail at greenlineextension@metro.net.